From Feet To Fathoms

ROBERT G. LEE

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2022 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/fromfeettofathom0000robe

WEAVER BOOK STORE
40 E. King, Lancaster, Pa.
USED BOOK DEPT.
-50 net
ABCDEFGHIJKL

n/c

252

FROM FEET TO FATHOMS

ROBERT G. LEE,

FROM FEET TO FATHOMS

BY

ROBERT G. LEE

FORMERLY PASTOR OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA. NOW PASTOR OF THE CITADEL SQUARE BAPTIST CHURCH, CHARLESTON, S. C.

NEW YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

COPYRIGHT, 1926,
BY THE SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD
OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

FROM FEET TO FATHOMS
— A —
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO

MY MOTHER

MRS. DAVID AYERS LEE

WHO SAID

THAT HER FIRST PRAYER

FOR ME

WAS THAT I WOULD BE A PREACHER

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	FROM FEET TO FATHOMS . . .	11
	"They sounded and found it twenty fathoms, and after a little space they sounded again and found it fifteen fathoms."—Acts 27: 27-28.	
II	CONTRASTS	35
	"A certain priest . . . and likewise a Levite . . . but a certain Samaritan."—Luke 10: 32,33.	
III	SLEEPING IN HARVEST	61
	"He that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame."—Prov. 10: 5.	
IV	THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST . .	76
	"Without the shedding of blood there is no remission."—Heb. 9: 22.	
V	THE POSSIBILITIES OF A LIFE . .	99
	Suggested by a sentence—	
VI	WHAT HE WAS MADE	130
	"And the Word was made flesh."—John 1: 14.	
VII	PAY DAY—SOMEDAY	163
	"The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the walls of Jezreel."—1 King 21: 23.	
VIII	EXCELLENCIES AT AHAVA	190
	"There, at the river of Ahava."—Ezra 8: 21.	

CHAPTER PAGE

IX THE TREASURES OF THE SNOW . . 216

"Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?"—Job 38: 22.

X WORTHLESS PURSUITS 248

"After whom is the King of Israel come out? After whom dost thou pursue? After a dead dog, after a flea."—1 Samuel 24: 14.

FROM FEET TO FATHOMS

I

FROM FEET TO FATHOMS

"About midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near some country; and sounded and found it twenty fathoms: and after a little space they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms."—Acts 27:27-28.

The road to Damascus lives in history. For on that road Saul of Tarsus, startled and jolted at the call of his own name, became a "new creature in Christ Jesus" (II Cor. 5:17). And thus, a broken program pointing the path of destiny, he made a voyage from the tea-cup of himself into the ocean of God's self. A slave of the temporal, he became a king of the eternal. In the blaze that smote him to his knees, he saw "the light of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus" (II Cor. 4:6). For him the first flame of the trail of glory which he was destined to leave across the Gentile world was kindled quickly. Even Saul, the brilliant law graduate, the young Rabbi, the rising hope of the Pharisees! Till that hour he had been a mournful monotony of jangling inharmonies, missing life's central melody —because he was the victim of dawdling ditties. But that day, so momentously significant, he came out from

"The vain pomp and shows,
From the pride that overflows
And the false conceits of men,
From all the narrow rules
And subtleties of schools
And the craft of tongue and pen
Into the life of Christ and the life in Christ."

Till that hour Saul of Tarsus had lived in the gray twilight of his Pharisaic ideal where his faults lay concealed or acquired the hue of positive graces. But through the transformation of redeeming grace his masquerading and parading virtues stood revealed as presumptuous sins.

What an hour that—when Saul was new-born. Then a Christian ambition became supreme; and in the fierceness of his desire he drew every minor yearning to the central purpose like tributaries converging upon the main stream. From the hour when it was "sunset in Damascus but dawn in the life of Saul," he "counted all things but loss that he might know Jesus and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering" (Phil. 3:7-10).

The revelation of the Lord led to the revelation of the limitless landscape. Greatly he believed. Greatly he was saved. Greatly he lived. "For weal or woe, come prison or scourge, stoning or exile or the cross itself, he, Saul, was Christ's man. And for Christ he was in peril of his life in Damascus (Acts 9:23-24); coldly suspected by his fellow

believers in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26); persecuted in Antioch (Acts 13:50); stoned in Lystra (Acts 14:19); assaulted in Iconium (Acts 14:5); beaten with many stripes in Philippi (Acts 16:23); attacked by a lewd and envious crowd in Thessalonica (Acts 17:5); pursued by callous enmity at Berea (Acts 17:13); despised in Athens (Acts 17:18-32); blasphemed in Corinth (Acts 18:6); exposed to the fierce wrath of the Ephesians (Acts 19:28); bound with chains in Jerusalem (Acts 21:33)!

Eventually, the Cross ever the one sovereignty to which his every limb and every talent and every power paid faithful and abundant tribute, he is on his way to Italy, sailing toward Rome! A prisoner he, in charge of a centurion by the name of Julius (Acts 27:1).

Now the ship on which Paul voyaged was buffeted for days by no small tempest. Neither sun nor stars in many days appeared and all hope that they would be saved was taken away (Acts 27:20). After fourteen days and nights of terrible tempest, while the ship was driven to and fro in the sea of Adria, about midnight, the sailors surmised that they drew near to some country! "And they sounded and found it twenty fathoms; and after a little space they sounded again and found it fifteen fathoms!" And from meditation upon that verse and from uttering the thoughts that have arisen in our mind we hope to bring you profit that perisheth not.

I—THE DANGEROUS DIRECTION.

That ship, while not out of the water, was going in a dangerous direction—from the deep waters to the shallows. It quickly went from twenty fathoms to fifteen fathoms.

Now the Christian religion is pitched on an ascending scale. It begins with an emancipation and ends with an ascension. It begins with the second birth and ends, so far as its connection with earth is concerned, in freedom from the second death (Rev. 2:11). It begins with a quickening from the dead (Eph. 2:1) and ends in its relation with the earth life with a triumph over death (I Cor. 15:54). The life we derive from Jesus manifests itself in growth and development. The abundant life is the life Jesus desires that we shall have and hold (John 10:10). Much fruit is an essential of real discipleship. Jesus does not urge us to be branches scantily clustered, nor trees sparsely fruited nor fields miserly productive (John 15:8). In Matthew eighteen and twenty-two, with arithmetic strangely at variance with our multiplication table, Jesus urged the abundant life when he told Peter to forgive "until seventy times seven"! Jesus insisted that we should go beyond the bare stint of requirement when he said "And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him two!" (Matt. 5:41). And again: "Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have

called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:15). There it is—the ascending scale of the Christian religion, beginning with servantship, growing into friendship, abiding in revelation from God the Father. Wonderful voyage into the deeper realities. Paul said: "I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment . . . being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:9-11). This urging to the Philippians was a reality in Paul's life; and we see there the ascending scale of the Christian religion rejoiced in by one to whom "it was given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him but also to suffer for his sake."

This dangerous direction—from the deeps to the shallows prevents the normal life. The danger of the Christian is arrested development. There are stunted Christians who should be growing Christians, little Christians who should be rugged and strong—Christians who are paddlers in a shallow surf—Christians satisfied with the shore edge or with an ignoble anchorage.

But we live contrary to God's purpose for us when we go and if we go from strength to weakness rather than from weakness to strength, from courage to timidity rather than from timidity to courage, from possession to mere profession rather than from profession to real possession, from expansion

to contraction rather than from the shrinkage state to an expanding growth, from much interest in one great purpose to much ado about a multitude of small concerns, from fervor in the spiritual to frivolity in the fleshly. Too often Christians have, as those on petty pleasures bent, gathered flowers—a mere handful for personal adornment—when there were fields "white unto the harvest" calling us to "bring in the sheaves." Too often men have contented themselves with a corner when there were continents waiting for conquest. We must acknowledge, blushingly, too, that while our ships have not been out of the water we have too often and too dishonorably voyaged from the deeps to the shallows, or have been contented with keeping the anchor busier and more overworked than the rudder. Such is not the normal life. God's purpose for every one of us is that we should be filled with all fulness of God. God is the "organ whose full breath is thunder." He wants us to be the "keys beneath his fingers pressed." Was it not something like that which Paul was saying when he wrote "But we all, with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory unto glory, even as by the Spirit of God"? (II Cor. 3:18).

The normal life is the life of growth—from the babe to the man, from the rill to the river, from the river to the ocean, from the bud to the blossom, from the blossom to the fruit, from the acorn to the oak,

from the microscopic cell to the coral reef. "First the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear" (Mark 4:28).

The normal life is not the "holding-its-own" life. There is no holding one's own in the spiritual life except by continually holding more. The Pharisee of ancient days made some measure of moral conquest. And then he sat down by it, fondly hugged, doted upon it until he became the prisoner of his own achievement. Who spoke the former sentence we know not, but we do know he spoke a profound truth.

The poet wrote:

> "Not enjoyment and not sorrow
> Is our destined end or way,
> But to act that each tomorrow
> Find us further than today!"

In practical realization, however, it is tragically true that hosts of Christians have large tracts of unannexed territory, many unattained possibilities, unnumbered unenjoyed blessings, invaluable unpossessed possessions, profitable unclimbed heights, pearl-spread unplumbed depths. Though our ships are not out of the water there is the evidence of the voyage in the dangerous direction—toward the shallows—in that there is a slothful timidity in daring, a passive acquiescence in small attainments, a careless indifference to the great stretch of the unattained, a cheap complimenting of the things of less value, and a lazy supineness in the face of many op-

portunities which are ours to make "the foulest filth of Rome the fairest fragrance of the New Jerusalem."

Mightily growing is the abnormal tendency of life to drift among small things—small anxieties, small pleasures, small ideals, small talk. And wise, indeed, is the teacher, the preacher, and all those in places of leadership who prescribe for those whom they must influence a tonic of big things. Somebody wisely said "The soul grows fat only on immensities, infinities, eternities; and life clothes itself in the most vigorous realities only in altitudes, magnitudes, infinitudes!" So unwise indeed are we to fritter away our energies, to sip stale water from tea cups when mighty rivers of refreshing and power are ours—if we will. "We forget the tiddley-winking only in contemplation of the tremendous!"

True. So we, rising from things terrestrial to things celestial, must tire of the microscopic and the cheap, and hunger for the majestic and the priceless, refusing to become victims of the easy track. "We lose life's shallow worries only in visions of the unplumbed depths!" Knowing this, we dare not, if we would attain the highest and best, consecrate our energies to rolling marbles when there are mountains to remove. There must be no "toying with trivialities" when the whole wide world with its restless millions waits in hunger for the Bread of Life, sits in darkness longing for the Light. There must be no "carnival of confectionery," no pallid

consolations, when the Cross of Christ must be preached and lived. In this hour men dare not, if they would be victors and not victims, so far forget their soldierly duties as to lie down, as did some of the men under Gideon, and drink of any stream which renders their necks an easy prey to a hidden sword (Judges 7:6). It is time to stop "fiddling" with life—time to stop "scratching" the surface of the field—time to cease "dabbling" with a profession, and time to make an end of "trifling" with religion. May our thoughts on the ship that voyaged from the deeps to the shallows urge us to know this truth and live it, knowing that the true creed of a Christian is not a propositional manifesto, but a personal life, the life of Christ, finding expression in the lives of men who also should say "For me to live is Christ."

II—THE REALITY OF THE REVERSE.

Even though there is the tragic shortcoming of the life that has gone from the deeps to the shallows, there is also the beautiful and glorious reality of the reverse of that. Even though there is the faint-hearted endeavor in the cause of God which we are forced to acknowledge, there is also the spirit in many hearts and the courage of high endeavor in many lives which no difficulty can daunt, no danger impede. Even though there are those who go their thoughtless way as though God had no claims on their lives, there are those who start no day and

live no day without the guidance and direction of Him who helps in all hazards.

Said Emerson:

> "The reason of all cowardice
> Is, that men are overgrown,
> And to be valiant, must come down
> To titmouse dimensions!"

Whatever else we may interpret that verse to mean, we do know that it hesitates not to declare that there are "titmouse men." Even though there are men who, with weak desire to be valiant, "come down to titmouse dimension," we take heart in knowing that there are those who are brave enough to "suffer tortures not accepting deliverance" (Heb. 11:35). Even though there are those who possess the unworthy shore-edge, shallow-water ambition which says

> "No farther shoot
> Thy broad ambitious branches,
> Contract thy firmament
> To the compass of a tent,"

there are those who have the hunger and thirst for righteousness in their souls and reach out, rowing with hundred-year oars, a stinging rebuke to apathy, accelerating the triumphant progress of all noble enterprises till time shall be no more, quickening the blood and firing the fervor of good men till the Master come. Even though there are those who unwisely believe that "a man's life consisteth in the

abundance of things which he possesseth," there are those who, by their works of love and gifts of liberality, show that they believe the reverse of that. While there are many who refuse to believe that "he who would be greatest must serve" (Luke 22:26) there are just as many who believe that "the sweetest lives are those to duty wed, whose deeds, both great and small, are close-knit strands of unbroken thread where love ennobles all." While some would put the Golden Rule in subordination to the rule-of-gold, giving primary things secondary place, there are some who love not such a cheap success. While some unwisely assert and stubbornly believe that banks, bonds, palaces, and cities are the greatest products of history, there are those who believe wisely that "we all are blind until we see that in the human plan, nothing is worth the making if it does not make the man." How glorious it is to know that in an age of shifting and drifting, men and women in many places have made it the loftiest science of life to go into the great deeps for God.

Men in the past did that—went from the shallows to the deeps, and on to the deepest, believing that God is a God of enlargement, enlarging us by his plans above and beyond our plans as the oak is enlarged above the acorn in strength, as the butterfly is enlarged above the chrysalis in growth, as the steel girder above men's sinew in power, as Niagara above the mud puddle in glory. "Thou hast set my feet in a large room" (Psa. 31:8) is the testi-

mony of many. "I called upon the Lord in distress; the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place" (Psa. 118:5) is the record of others. Moses, despising ignoble anchorage in Egypt, launched out into the deeps for God—and God enabled him to bring forth mighty law and mighty deliverance. David, spurning the shallow turned his life toward the deeps—and, by God's guidance, he gave us matchless music and a mighty empire. Amos and Hosea, venturing boldly from the shore and the shallows adjacent, were led of God to produce social ethics. Tennyson and Browning, aweary of the pale-faced realities of the shore lines, launched into the deeps, and, by the truth of God, brought awakening truth. Paul, the shallow in him responding to the deep in God, turned toward and into the deeps, and taught the world spiritual liberty.

The life that voyages from the shallows to the deeps, even on to the deepest, is the life ever fruitful and never barren, ever rich and abiding and dynamic, ever fascinating and never wearisome. How beautiful the life that goes from the love of friends on to the love of one's enemies, from a timid faith that fears to a faith that "laughs at the shaking of spears," from the sickness of self to the health of God. The old hymn expresses it:

"Out of my bondage, sorrow, and night,
Into thy freedom, gladness and light,
Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come,

Out of my want and into thy wealth,
Out of my sickness and into thy health,
Out of my sin and into thy self,
Jesus, I come to thee."

There is expressed the journey from "fifteen fathoms to twenty fathoms." Who would say a life making such a voyage is not a lovely life? Is it not ever glorious to "come out of our shameful failure and loss into the glorious gain of Christ's Cross"?

In A. D. 58, Paul, fighting his good fight under the stormy banner of Jesus, wrote his letter to the Romans. In that letter we hear him saying: "For to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I know not; for the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. O wretched man that I am!" (Romans 7:18-24).

In A. D. 63, Paul, having grown mightily, wrote to the Philippians. In that letter we hear one of the most transcendent triumphs of articulation ever uttered. Listen: "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). Was not that a beautiful voyage? I say. So say you. So God.

Once in his life Tennyson wrote:

"O, for a man to arise in me
That the man I am may cease to be!"

And fifty years later Tennyson wrote:

"I have climbed the snows of the age
And gaze on the fields of the past
Where I sank with the body at times
In the slough of low desire!
But I hear no yelp of the beast,
And the man is quiet at last,
As he stands on the heights of life with
A glimpse of a height that is higher!"

There is the voyage from the shallows to the deep and to the deeper than the deep, and to the deepest. Ah! How tragic that so many say and are content to say:

"I ponder not the farthest reach
Of yon infinitude, the sea,
These ripples on the silver beach
Trace wonder vast enough for me!"

What was it that happened one memorable day on the road to Damascus? Paul saw Christ. As an inevitable consequence of seeing him there came into his life the passion of the far horizon. All the "narrowing limits of Jewish prejudice and all the cramping bonds of Pharisaic superstition" fell from him. Then, with the ship of his life turned away from such light foam and shallow waters, he launched out into the ocean depths, storming the great centers of civilization and the capitals of proud empires in the name of Jesus. Feeling himself debtor to Greek and barbarian, to bond and free, to Jew and Gentile, he passed from sea to sea, from island to island, from continent to continent—

preaching mightily, living mightily. A more thrilling story of hazard, hardship, and heroism has never been written. It was all a voyage from the shallows to the deeps with Christ Jesus as the chief captain.

Think of William Carey. On May 31, 1792, he preached, greatly and mightily preached, at Nottingham, the great sermon which gave rise to our modern missionary movement, "Attempt Great Things for God, Expect Great Things from God!" In India he put that sermon in practice. On November 11th, 1793, the very day on which the French revolutionists tore the cross from Notre Dame, smashed it in the streets, and abjured Christianity, William Carey landed at Calcutta and claimed a new continent for Christ. He became master of a dozen languages, gave the peoples the Word of God in their own tongue, and built up the finest college in the empire. What explains it all? Just this: A voyage from the shallows of mere thinking of great things to the deeps of mighty achievement for God.

And Moody, the boot-store clerk, took one continent in one hand and the other continent in the other hand, and rocked them both toward God. Wonderful voyage from the shallows to the deep! No wonder there is written on his tomb at Northfield this statement: "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (I John 2:17).

When Adoniram Judson set his face toward

Burma there were great pulpits wanting him. And some, when he, with his wonderful voice turned aside from these offers, called his burning desire for the foreign land a "wild nightmare of a disordered brain." And six years he worked for his first convert. But now, the colleges, the many churches, the many thousands who have come to know Christ testify that this hero who, weighted down with heavy chains many age-long days and who languished in loathsome prisons through weeks years long in agony, left to the world the imperishable record of a voyage into the deepest of the deeps for God.

The disciple, Peter, caught fish on Galilee—many fish. But one day, at the call of that strange and mighty One from Nazareth, even Jesus, he left his nets and followed Him whose only promise was that he should some day catch, not fish, but men. On the day of Pentecost Peter threw out the gospel net —and three thousand men, squirming under the conviction of sin more than fish jerk and quiver under the hot sun of the beach, were "landed for God." What a voyage that under the good hand of God—the voyage from the shallows of catching fish, only fish, to the voyage of catching men, for God.

And John Bunyan! Think of him. A dissolute tinker he, living in the muddy shallows of an unclean life. Unhappy he in his own thoughts, vile and low, he came to Christ—and to Christ yielded his all. Though put in jail for preaching the Gos-

pel, he wrote a book which crawled out from that jail, where he remained twelve years, and that book walked up and down more bypaths and traveled more highways and knocked at more doors and spoke to more people in their mother tongue than any book save the one Book, the Bible, which is beyond all books as the river is beyond the rill in reach. Of him who made this voyage from unclean shallows to pure deeps with Christ, Macaulay says: "Bunyan is, indeed, as decidedly the first allegorist as Demosthenes is the first of orators, or Shakespeare the first of dramatists." What a voyage from the shallows Bunyan made.

Mrs. Prentiss, who wrote "Stepping Heavenward," expressed it well when she wrote:

"Once earthly joy I craved,
Sought peace and rest,
Now thee alone I seek—
Give what is best!"

And time would fail me to tell of Rodney Smith, the gipsy lad, and of Jerry Macauley, the Bowery criminal, and of Ruskin, the apostle of art, and of Drummond, the cultured college professor, and of many thousands of others in places known and unknown, in obscure corners and in high exalted positions, who have launched their ships into the deeps for God. How many to whom the world has given no line and built no monument who have in great way and small way "sailed amid the plumbless

depths" through the long nights of darkness and through the heat of a smiting noon. Many, in a grander way than Beethoven took "the surging sea of tone and made it subservient to his rod," have spurned the shallows where no dangers lie for the deep with perils many. Men and women, with the burning desire to do their best and to do their most for God, have, in a more glorious way than Angelo "from the sterile womb of stone raised children unto God," snapped the chains that held them to ignoble anchorage in the shallows and have gone where the deep billows rule. The reality of the reverse of the dangerous direction is the reality and experience of their living, daily, nightly, weekly, monthly, yearly, life-timely. God be praised—for them. God be praised for all who "follow in their train!"

III—THE DEMAND FOR THE DEEP.

There is a demand for deeper depths to our Christian living. We need a deeper love to meet the hates and to bridge the chasms across which men glare at each other in suspicion and ill will. We need to be brave enough to meet the demand of deeper prayer life that will knock until barred doors "open of their own accord." We need to be wise enough to have and to hold the deep faith which believes that we never test the resources of God until we attempt the impossible. There is a deeper demand to-day for a passion for the lost—a passion

that will not be satisfied until it "sees of the travail of its soul and is satisfied."

When a boy at the old country school I studied in mythology of Atlas, big and brawny, with the world on his shoulders. That is myth. But Jesus, sweating blood in the garden of Gethsemane and bleeding his life away on the Cross, is no myth, but a stern reality. Jesus with the Cross on his shoulders and with the weight of the world's sins on his heart is not fiction and myth but the truest history of all history and the grim reality of all realities. And as long as there is one hymn to sing about the Cross and one soul to be saved by the blood of the Cross there will be a demand for deep concern and deep consecration.

Facing today the demand from God's Word and by the need of the world sin-smitten and iniquity blighted, we must see to it that our religion is ever a daily devotional vitality and never a mere occasional conventionality. Facing the world's dark tragedies, its innumerable woes that come tramping in from many lands, its deluge of blood and tears, its chasms, its wars, its bloodshed, its wonderings and wanderings and wickedness, we must turn from mere philosophic finery to the plain, sensible language of the Christian religion which heartens men to bear heavy burdens and makes them brave to meet perilous situations.

Look! Europe with its hunger, restlessness, and Bolshevism, staggering like a drunken man recov-

ering from a debauch; India with its thirty million gods and dire poverty; China with its political and religious crises and miles of beggars; Africa with its dark cannibalism and tragic heathenism; Japan with its eager desire to become Westernized without being Christianized; Latin America with its appalling illiteracy and semi-idolatry; the United States with its fifty-eight million outside of any church—with its twenty-seven million under twenty-five years not in any Sunday school or institution of religious training whatsoever—with its five and a half million illiterates—with its millions of malcontents—all make a mighty appeal to the followers of him who has "a balm for every wound and a cordial for every care."

In the face of all this and in the face of the demand for deeper thinking and speaking and doing there must be many, especially among the young, who will mightily believe that the sweetest songs are yet to be sung, the noblest poems yet to be penned, the greatest books yet to be written, the finest sermons yet to be preached, the truest lives yet to be lived, the most heroic exploits yet to be achieved. The pinnacles beckon, and the topmost crags are calling. And "deep calleth unto deep." "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets!"

IV—THE PROMISE OF THE PRESENCE.

What kind of promise? A promise that never fails—that never can fail. Whose presence? The

presence of him who filled the disciple's boat with fish when that disciple "launched out into the deep at his command." The presence of him who hushed the howling winds and stilled the troubled sea centuries ago. The promise of him to whom all power is given in heaven and in earth (Matt. 28:18). The promise of him who cannot lie (Titus 1:2). The promise of him who hath said "Go ye therefore . . . and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:19-20).

Christ Jesus, to whom all power is given in heaven and on earth, has given us his Word. He will go with us, being our guide, through trackless forests and impenetrable jungles. He will go with us, being our pilot, over seas uncharted and across oceans illimitable. He will go with us, being our path-preparer, to poles undiscovered. The promise which was to the disciples is to us now. And the world-wide proclamation is vitalized by the world-wide presence. And this world-wide presence is possessed of a world-wide power.

All who trust him find a real experience the promise God made to Jacob: "And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest. . . for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Gen. 28:15). For those who launch out into the deeps for his causes he will "make bare his mighty arm." And they shall find it really real for them what the prophet said about preparing the way of the Lord:

"Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain" (Isa. 40:4). And those who go forth into the deeps to serve the Lord shall find that "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint!" (Isa. 40:31).

Every promise so royally given will be royally fulfilled. Even as his grace is to all, so is his guidance promised to all who will follow.

Who is a path if any be misled or unled? Jesus. Who is a robe if any be scantily clothed or unclothed? Jesus. Who is vital bread if any have but crumbs or are unfed? Jesus. Who is strength if any be weak? Jesus. Who is health if any be sick? Jesus. Who is light for those who are in darkness? Jesus. Hath he not said: "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life"? He has. Read John 8:12. Who is wealth if any be in poverty? Jesus, who "though rich, for our sakes became poor that we through his poverty might become rich" (II Cor. 8:9). "The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him!" (Romans 10:12). Who will be to us to the last hour of the longest day our "pillar of cloud by day"? Jesus. Who will be to us through the longest night, black as the pit from sunset to sunrise, our "pillar of fire by night"?

Jesus, mighty Jesus. Who will be wondrous, all-encompassing completeness for our incompleteness? Jesus. "And ye are complete in him who is the head of all principality and power" (Col. 2:10). Who is the unfailing and abiding rest for our restlessness? Jesus. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matt. 11:28-29). Who will be unto us, when we need it most and always, wisdom? Jesus. "Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us wisdom" (I Cor. 1:30).

Yes, he will be with us to enable us to prevail mightily in the bitterest of life's battles. He will walk with us giving us sure footing in the roughest ways and on the "narrow ledges overlooking yawning chasms." He will comfort with no pallid and failing comfort in life's sorrows. He will calm with no variant steadiness in the conflicts of life. He will prompt in all of life's perplexities. He will fan in all of life's faintnesses. He will guide in all of life's glooms. He will help in all of life's hazards. He will direct in all of life's doubts. He will be a voice in all of life's solitudes. He will be a star in all of life's night. Therefore, knowing this, turn your ship toward the deeps—from the fifteen fathoms to the twenty and the hundred and the thousand!

"Today's wealth may be tomorrow's poverty; today's health may be tomorrow's sickness; today's

happy companionship of joy may be tomorrow's aching solitude of heart, but today's Christ is tomorrow's Christ, "the same yesterday, today, and forever."

Believing this, turn thee from the shallows to the deeps, ever preferring the duty you owe to God to any danger you fear from men, knowing assuredly that "no weapon formed against thee shall prosper" (Isa. 54:17).

Turn thee quickly, turn thee now, turn thee prayerfully, from the shallows to the deeps, knowing assuredly that He who lights the path of your pilgrimage will illumine also the valley of the shadow of death, knowing ever and forgetting it never that the hand that opened to you the realm of grace will open also the gates of glory.

And let it never, for one minute of any hour of any day of any week of any month of any year of all your life, be said or known on earth or written or known in heaven that, as to your personal devotion to Christ Jesus, "they sounded and found it twenty fathoms and after a little space they sounded again and found it fifteen fathoms!"

II

CONTRASTS

"A certain priest . . and likewise a Levite . . but a certain Samaritan."—Luke 10:32, 33.

There are things immeasurable. Somebody said: "You can measure a carpet or a wall with a yardstick, but you cannot measure the lightning; you can cast a plumb line down to fathom the ocean's depths, but you cannot fathom the grief of a mother with a dead baby in her lap; you can schedule the comet's journey and calculate the distance of a star, but there are no logarithms or lenses by which to estimate the joy of two lovers who go a-twozing in the twilight; you can analyze water, earth, or gasses and determine their constituent parts, but you cannot measure the elements that compose innocence, conscience, or remorse; you can set a value on the services of a bricklayer or a salesman, but you cannot even approximate the value of an act of unselfish service." With these quoted words we agree. And we also acknowledge that there are truths expressed and life principles taught and revelations made in the tenth chapter of Luke's gospel before which reason is dumb and our highest wisdom worshipful.

A certain lawyer wanted a definition of the word

"neighbor." In answer Jesus spoke the parable in which he points out how true love works—simply and beautifully and forcibly gives "an illustrative example of the working of benevolence, as contrasted with that of selfishness, an idealized example of true benevolence in contrast with utter selfishness."

And, with the thought of contrast in our minds, we wish to bring some contrasts in the conduct of the priest and the Levite as set against the conduct of the Samaritan; and as we do this we hope we shall inspire some to be "better neighbors to him in need and better friends to him who is foreign born and foreign bred."

The priest and the Levite, both of them, were honored by the Jews; the Samaritan, in all places and always, was regarded as an outcast by the Jews. Now the priest served in the temple, and the Levite assisted the priest in the temple affairs and was supported by the tithes of the people. And both of them regarded a Samaritan as one excommunicated and accursed, denied all share in the resurrection. We will, however, say no more about this lest we weary ourselves and bore you in "carrying coals to Newcastle." Let us notice the contrasts.

I—THE TWO—THE PRIEST AND THE LEVITE—HAD TWICE THE EYES BUT NOT HALF THE SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

They saw, but they did not see well. The priest "when he saw him," when he saw the man thief-

filched and robber-beaten, "passed by on the other side." The Levite "came and looked on him," but when he saw the man by the road bleeding and bruised from much beating, "he passed on the other side." They had eyes but saw not; they had ears but heard not; they had feet but used them to go *from* the place where help was needed; they had hands but they helped not. Their eyes numbered four to the Samaritan's two, but the eyes of both of them, having wandered from God's calling and from God's keeping, saw not half as well as did the two eyes of the Samaritan. They two had the eyes of the fool which are in the ends of the earth (Prov. 17:24).

Thus we see that the philosopher who knows many things may not know the best things, and those who know the largest number of other secrets may miss the "secret of the Lord" by having eyes that see not, or see distortedly, as did the eyes of the priest and the Levite. The master of scientific wisdom may be farther than the humblest unlearned child from the Kingdom of God. No vision, or narrow vision, has often cost men vision of heart. And today, when the cry of the world is for help, unless we have ears that hear aright and eyes that see aright we may, with all our straining up into the heavens and down into the deeps, miss the very present task and the very present opportunity. There is a great peril in being microscopically and distortedly near-sighted, which causes us to see with a

narrowness that is selfishness. There is also the peril of being telescopically and erroneously far-sighted which causes us to see not "the half-dead men" whose wounds cry to us daily.

The priest and the Levite, even though they had twice as many eyes as the Samaritan had, saw nothing worthy rescue in the half-dead, bruised, and bloody stranger by the roadside. Blind adherents to conventional ideas, they had a cheaply poor conception of the value of man.

In this respect their spiritual teeth were loose, their spiritual hands were weak, their spiritual feet were rheumatic. So they did not see him as a neighbor to them nor did they see themselves as neighbor to him. They were victims of self-absorption. Where they "waited on injunction," the good Samaritan carried out a principle, knowing that love meant the doing of everything in his power for those who required help. With the ghastly bruises of the unfortunate man before their eyes and the moans of the suffering man in their ears and the helplessness of the man in reach of their arms, they saw love as a feeling rather than a fact, as a sentiment instead of a sacrifice, as "voluble verbiage" rather than "dynamic deed." No doubt the priest was on his way to make a great speech somewhere on "The Power of Philanthropy" or on "The Brotherhood of Man," but they had no ears for this man's moans nor eyes compassionate nor hands helpful.

In our attitude to the poor and unlearned and the fallen we must be careful lest we "pass by on the other side" seeing something in the iron but nothing in the ore, something in the stamped coin but nothing in the rough bullion, something in the finished statue but nothing in the unchiseled marble, something in the towering oak but nothing in the small acorn. We can too easily and too unwisely assume the air of "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" We can too quickly "pass by on the other side" men who are worth much to the Kingdom of God.

The priest and the Levite, both of them spiritually blind and deaf and rheumatic, saw no opportunity for service and for honoring God in this out-of-the-way place, in this obscure corner of a wandering road. They could "serve" splendidly in the temple. They could kneel reverently within the sacred precinct of the "altar boundary" but not in the dust of that roadway, no, not even if it meant to lift up the head of a wounded one. They turned scornful eyes to the "commonplace unfortunate" in that "commonplace place." In the temple where the easy worshipers of the age were satisfied with a religion of "burnt-offerings" and "peace offerings of fat beasts" they could "serve and worship" God, but nothing for God or man could they do here away from the "assembled congregation." Deeply entrenched behind the dignity of a solemn antiquity, religion was to them a thing to be used on occasion

only. Of them it could never be said, "Blessed are your eyes for they see and your ears for they hear!" They did that which was formally prescribed, but they had not yet learned to see that every sufferer whom we can assist has a claim of neighbor love upon us which we cannot repudiate without injuring him and dishonoring God!

II—THE TWO WERE LIVING TWICE THE TIME, BUT THE ONE—THE GOOD SAMARITAN—WAS LIVING THE MOST.

As the watch clicks and ticks, as the pendulum of a clock swings, as the shadow of a sundial moves, they were living two seconds to his one, two minutes to his one, two hours to his one, two days to his one; but by God's measuring rod and by God's scales and by God's standards and by God's clock and by God's calendar, the good Samaritan was living ten hours to their one, ten years to their one day! By the way the good Samaritan let humanity put aside nationality in the presence of this utter stranger, and by the way he dismounted to help this suffering fellow-man, he did more to honor God in one hour than did the priest and the Levite in one hundred hours of "passing on the other side."

They two lived the longest, as the hands of the clock or the figures on the calendar or the whirling of the earth around the sun measures time, but the good Samaritan lived the most. Yes, they two, ever reverent toward their venerable creeds, lived

longest as minutes and hours, days and years are counted as they take swift flight into the tomb of time, but the good Samaritan, as the oil in the wounds and the wine in the bloody mouth and the bandages on the broken and bruised flesh testify, lived most and lived best. It is not how long we live but how much we live that makes us to clothe our lives in vigorous realities for him who is the Life. It is not duration but intensity that weighs most on God's scales and measures most by the measuring rod of God-honoring standards. When by the order of the Almighty we launch our vessels and by the breath of the Almighty fill our sails, we live more in one day than we live in a whole year's anchorage at some ignoble wharf. When we "yield our bodies to him as a living sacrifice," and let the "muscle of the Almighty" swing our battle axes we live, really and highly live, more in a week than we would loitering in our tents during centuries of self-absorption and ease.

In the valley of Elah, Goliath "drew near morning and evening and presented himself forty days" (I Sam. 17:16) and hurled his defiant challenge to Saul and his men. "When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid" (I Sam. 17:11). But one day a shepherd lad, David, son of Jesse, came into camp; and this lad, with only a sling and a pebble but with a heart made brave by the faith he had in God, conquered the giant—and did more

in one brief hour of courageous battle than had Saul and all Israel in forty days and forty nights. He weighed more, David did, with his sling and pebble and staff than did Goliath with his helmet of brass and coat of mail and target of brass and spear that weighed eighteen pounds, because manhood always outweighs metal and meat. Moreover, David lived more in the swing of the hand that held the sling than did the timid and frightened "men of Saul" in many days, for one brave deed has in it more life than all the "quiet resting and timid counseling" of any army.

Two women, both of them known to me, died in Carolina. One woman died at the age of one hundred and seven—and had shut God out of her heart for one hundred and three years, having heard only three gospel sermons in all her life, having been baptized at the age of over one hundred. She lived a long time by the swing of the pendulum of the old, old clock in her home. A long time she lived by the counting of the suns that passed over her head—a long time by the snows of many winters white upon her head—a long time as men count time. The other woman died at twenty-seven and, with hosts of sorrowing friends around her grave, and with her baby in the home crying for the mother's breast, they put her to rest in the village graveyard. She, like Dorcas, was a "good woman, full of good works and almsdeeds which she did." Days and weeks and months and years, gladly and willingly, she had

served in that community, visiting the sick, helping the needy, ministering in the home, teaching in the Bible school, working here and there and everywhere, "doing with her might what her hand found to do" (Ecc. 9:10). Her going was like the taking away of an oasis in a desert, like the closing of a wayside well where thousands of weary pilgrims refreshed themselves, like the removal of a "house by the side of the road," like the taking away of a great shade in the burning noonday heat and the taking away of a comforting shelter in the time of storm. Judged by the good she did, she lived more in one year than did the other woman in one hundred years. One lived the longest, yes, but the other lived the most.

Methuselah lived a long, long time. "And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died" (Gen. 5:27). But Jesus died at the age of thirty-three. Who lived the most, Jesus or Methuselah? Let the blind whom he made to see answer. Let the deaf whom he made to hear answer. Let the cripple whom he made to walk answer. Let the dumb whom he made to speak answer. Let the lepers whom he cleansed answer. Let those who saw their dead raised to life answer. Methuselah lived the longest—yes, the calendar says so and the clock says so and the multiplication table says so and the nine hundred and thirty-six years more that he lived on earth than Jesus lived say so, but the thirty-three that Jesus lived had more

of love and service and sacrifice than all the others. Methuselah lived the longest but Jesus lived the most.

Intensity and not duration is what counts most. And we need to learn that a man with a locomotive can do more in one day than a man with a wheelbarrow in a year. And we need to learn that it is not how long we are on this earth that counts most and means most, but how much we do and are that means most and counts most for time and eternity.

Who can tell by the mere extent of days as a measuring rod how much Jean Valjean lived when his soul was so troubled that his hair turned white in a single night? Who can tell by mere swings of a clock pendulum or by the reach of the shadow of the sundial how much Jesus lived when he "saw us plunged in deep distress and flew to our relief"? Who can tell by the calendar how much more people live who are "doers of the Word and not hearers only" than live those who are "hearers ever and doers never"?

> "We live in deeds, not years,
> In thoughts, not breaths,
> In feelings, not in figures on a dial;
> We should count time by heart throbs;
> He lives the longest who lives the most,
> Acts the best; lives more in weeks than
> In years do some whose fat blood sleeps
> As it creeps along their veins!"

Yes, the priest and the Levite lived the longest,

as figures mount up and as hours are marshaled, but the good Samaritan lived the most.

And not only so. There are other things to notice as they stand out in such vivid contrast! We would have you note that

III—THEY TWO—THE PRIEST AND THE LEVITE—OUTNUMBERED THE GOOD SAMARITAN TWO TO ONE, BUT THE GOOD SAMARITAN OUTWEIGHED THEM BOTH.

They two, the priest and the Levite, outnumbered the good Samaritan. Yes, for they had two bodies to his one, two hearts to his one, four hands to his two, four feet to his two, four arms to his two, four eyes to his two, four ears to his two. But, judged by the need of the man by the roadside, and judged by his attitude toward the man and judged by what he did for the man, the good Samaritan outweighed them one hundred to one—and even more than that, as pure gold outweighs feathers, as fine linens outweigh rags, as diamonds outweigh moth dust and iron rust.

Walking under the finger posts of the Golden Rule, walking in the light of the praise and approval of God, walking by the urge of a compassionate heart, the good Samaritan weighed much in God's scales. Outnumbered was he by the rule of any counting method and by the steadfastness of the multiplication table, but he was not outweighed by them. By his splendid deeds blazoned abroad by a

thousand trumpets, I say he outweighed them. By his self-forgetfulness and self-conquest, and judging him by that, I declare the good Samaritan outweighed the priest and the Levite by more than a two to one excess.

And now, in these stupendous days, such as God seldom saw, and such as the present world never saw, we need, everybody needs, to know men and women who, though they may at times be outnumbered, cannot be outweighed. We can follow their leadership without fear; we can trust them without doubt; we can love them without disappointment; we can join them in the battle, knowing that we shall "move on mightily to essential victory!" Thus it has been in years gone by!

Elijah, grand old Elijah, was outnumbered by the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, but Elijah was not outweighed at all. Gideon's valiant three hundred were outnumbered greatly by the Midianite hosts, but these three hundred, with lamps and pitchers in their hands and a mighty courage in their hearts, were not at all outweighed. We have only to read the eighteenth chapter of First Kings to know what we have said about Elijah is true. We have only to read the seventh chapter of Judges to rejoice in the truth of what we have just spoken about Gideon and his small army. Shamgar, great Shamgar, was outnumbered by the more than six hundred Philistines whom he fought, but Shamgar outweighed them mightily. "Shamgar . . . who

slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad, and he also delivered Israel" (Judges 3:31). Shammah also was greatly outnumbered by the enemies of the Lord, but he, for God's cause outweighed them all. We read: "And the Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentils, and the people fled from the Philistines, but he stood in the midst of the ground and defended it, and slew the Philistines; and the Lord wrought a great victory" (II Sam. 23:11). And God can always win great victories with men who, though outnumbered, are not outweighed.

Luther, the mighty Martin Luther, when in 1517 he nailed the theses to the door of the church in Wittenberg, was greatly outnumbered; but who dares to say that he was outweighed? When he nailed his fearless theses there, the sacred walls of the church held many "marvelous" relics, such as a chip from Noah's ark, some soot from the furnace in which the three Hebrew children were miraculously protected, a piece of wood from our Lord's cradle, some of St. Christopher's beard, and a thousand other "sacred" relics. And it took a man who weighed something to weigh more than all those who outnumbered him. But Luther did them all outweigh!

Joseph was outnumbered by his brethren, but he outweighed them. Daniel was outnumbered in Babylon, but, "purposing in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's meats and with the wine which the king drank," he outweighed the

whole gang. Paul was outnumbered on Mars Hill and in the Court of Agrippa and in Rome, but never was he outweighed by all of them. The widow's mites that day when Jesus sat over against the treasury were outnumbered by the coins dropped in by others, but her mites were not outweighed by any of the coins nor by all that was dropped in. Jesus meant just this when he said, "She hath given more than they all" (Luke 21:3). The twelve apostles were outnumbered when they started out, Jesus having cast the weight of the world's evangelization upon their shoulders, but the fact that they soon "lit a lamp in the palace of the Cæsars" is proof that they were not outweighed. Wyclif, who defied the anathemas of Rome and thus saved the English Bible, was outnumbered but not outweighed. Wilberforce, who defied the enmity and the power of capitalists, was often outnumbered but never outweighed—no, not any more than the dust of the roadway outweighs the ore in the mountain's bowels. In military affairs Lee was outnumbered, but he was never outweighed. Miltiades with only ten thousand Greeks was outnumbered by one hundred thousand Persians, but he was not outweighed. And we are not talking in the realm of mere avoirdupois and "bulging bulk" when we speak as we do.

The religion of Jesus—the religion that makes a man to know what it is to have his feet taken "out of the miry clay and put on the solid rock" —has been and is outnumbered, but it never has been

and never will be outweighed. It may be outnumbered by Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Shintoism, Eddyism, and other kindred paganisms, but as long as there are human hearts that want comfort and human minds that want prompting and human lives that want rest from burdens and immortal souls that want eternal salvation, this glorious religion will never be outweighed. All these other "religions," so "faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null," are, when it comes to meeting the deep needs of humanity, small, slight, insufficient, abysmally inadequate. These, all these, when put alongside the religion of Jesus Christ, are as dwarfs, feebly small, standing by a giant; as moles and mice, some utterly blind and some squeaky and noisy, standing among lions and tigers; as fluttering, quarreling, flitting sparrows claiming the reach of wing that a mighty eagle has.

The Bible, by many books, by many multitudes of books, has been outnumbered, but it has not been and cannot be outweighed. It is above and beyond all books as the river is beyond the rill in reach, as the sun is beyond and above the tallow dip in brightness, as the steel girder is above and beyond the wisp of straw in strength, as the ocean is beyond the mill pond in treasure and grandeur, as the grapevine is beyond the bramble in fruitbearing. Knowing this, strange it is that so many prefer other books than the Bible; passing strange that some prefer books with the taint of the gutter in them; strange,

very strange, that many are swimming through sewerage to get one drop of truth when the Bible, God's book, my mother's book, book that is still and will ever be the monarch among the trees, is near at hand. How tragic and sad that some should feed on carrion, or starve, when it is true, as many say, "O Lord, how sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold, sweeter than honey and the droppings of the honeycomb!" (Psa. 19:10).

The church of the Lord Jesus, which "he purchased with his own precious blood," is by multitudes of other institutions outnumbered, but it is never outweighed. And, after many centuries have passed, it is still true, and will ever be true that "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the habitations of Jacob" (Psa. 87:2). The Christian Church, "created by his humiliation, by the perfection of his human life, by the mystery of his passion, by his victory over sin and death and all the enemies of the race, by his triumphant resurrection, by his ascension, by the Spirit bestowed as the result of his own accomplished victory," can never be outweighed by any organization, for the Church is the instrument of the risen Lord for carrying on his doing and his teaching. As long as the "master passion" of the Church is to unveil God to the world and to establish the Kingdom of God upon the earth, she will proclaim the evangel to the uttermost parts of

the earth and win territory for the King. What life the church has, which life does not keep her from being outnumbered but does keep her from being outweighed. Somebody said of the church, Spurgeon, I believe: "Plunge her under the wave, and she rises the purer from her washing; thrust her in the fire, and she comes out the more bright for her burning; cut her in sunder, and each piece will make another church; behead her, and, like the hydra of old, she will have a hundred heads for every one you cut away; strip her naked, and she will come forth clothed with garments of praise; starve her, but, eventually and triumphantly, she will come forth with bread in her hands for the hungry of the world!" And this ought to make us to say from our hearts: "I love thy church, O God, her walls before me stand, dear as the apple of thine eye, and graven on thy hands."

And, the watchings we have given the good Samaritan, as we have seen him outnumbered but not outweighed, ought to make us go forth glorying in truths never outweighed, in lives never outweighed, in achievements never outweighed.

But we have not finished.

IV—THEY TWO—THE PRIEST AND THE LEVITE—TRAVELED THE FASTEST, BUT THE GOOD SAMARITAN TRAVELED THE BEST.

They three traveled the same road, and on the same day, but how differently they traveled. The

priest and the Levite, who "passed by on the other side," went on their way hindered by no impediment, burdened by no encumbrance, slowed up in their traveling by no unsought load. Hence they could travel faster than the good Samaritan. While he who put the man on his beast and held him on the beast and walked beside the beast had to travel slowly, they, unburdened in heart by the man's plight and unburdened in any way by "surplus baggage" left by the roadside went on their way, piously moralizing, no doubt, over the man's misdeeds, or, within their own hearts, saying: "It is the business of the Benevolent Society to look after such," or, declaring with vigor, that the Government ought to make the roadways safer for those who traveled them. And doubtless, when they arrived at their destination, they told many "anxious listeners" of the need of the man, of the dangers by the way, of the immediate demand for "stricter police regulation" of the highways. But to give a lecture to others when the cry is for help from many is like "giving a serpent for a fish, or a scorpion for an egg." Truly they had in "matters all minute" washed the color out of their religion—had fasted the red blood out of their atrophied convictions.

Yes, the two traveled the fastest, but the one, even the good Samaritan, despised by both of them, traveled the best. He traveled because the rapidly westering sun could not weaken the compassion in his heart, because urgent business engagements could

not cause him to "pass by on the other side," because love for the fellow unfortunate would not let him leave him there in the bloody dust. Gripped by the "majesty of queenly love," he made a way for the man. "Wherever queenly love exists she makes a way for herself. No fashionable barriers will stop her progress; no denominational boundaries will hedge in her efforts; no guilt, even, will seal up the fountain of her benevolence. Over all such obstacles she will triumph!"

The good Samaritan did not travel so fast as the others, but he traveled so splendidly. He traveled best, because he helped another along the way. He who helps others along the rough roads and over the steep hills and through the dark valleys and across swollen streams always travels best, though he may not travel as fast or as comfortably or as gayly. 'Tis ever so. He who puts another "on his beast" and walks himself travels better than he who "rides alone." He who gives his stirrups to another's foot and his saddle to him who needeth traveleth better than he who "passes by on the other side."

When Theodore Roosevelt toured Africa, he traveled faster than did David Livingstone, but, by the records of heaven, Livingstone, the great missionary, traveled better than Roosevelt, the great statesman. When the Barnum and Bailey circus went through England it traveled faster than did D. L. Moody, but it was Moody who traveled best. Cæsar traveled in his chariot faster toward Rome than did Paul,

but, by the message which he carried, and by the life he lived, Paul traveled the best. And many other examples we might mention, but this will suffice to emphasize the thought we would plant in your minds and hearts.

Behold the road to Jerusalem! On the way to that city Ahab, in pomp and power, rode. Jeroboam, with the dazzling light of a flaming comet, rode. Solomon, in gorgeous glory unexcelled so far as earthly splendor is concerned, rode. And David, mighty statesman, poet, musician, warrior, in splendor becoming his state, rode. And others rode, traveling fast. But Jesus, Son of Man and Son of God, walked, walked ever, walked all the way. The King of kings walked where all the others rode; his sandal prints were seen in the road where chariot wheels made impressions deep. They traveled faster than he, the mighty One. But who traveled the best? Let the blind answer—the blind whom he made to see. Let the deaf answer—the deaf whom he made to hear. Let the dumb answer—the dumb whose tongue strings he loosed. Let the crippled answer—the crippled whose twisted limbs he straightened. Let the lepers, the loathsome lepers by the wayside answer—the lepers whom he cleansed. Let the broken-hearted answer—the broken-hearted whom he healed and comforted. Let the sick answer—the sick whose fever fires he quenched, whose diseases he conquered. Let the sinners answer—the sinners whom he took from the

gutter and clothed anew and cleansed inwardly. Let these, these all, answer. In mighty chorus they will assert that it is not he who travels fastest who travels best. And as long as the parable of the good Samaritan is abroad in the world, showing that his benevolence was not hindered by any considerations of personal convenience, so long will men learn that we travel best when we help others, less fortunate, to travel the way with us—so long will men know that he who "puts another on his beast" travels best.

Let *us* learn that, too, lest we be found giving a stone when bread is needed, giving a serpent when a fish is asked, giving a scorpion when an egg is desired.

And this, also, in conclusion:

V—THEY TWO—THE PRIEST AND THE LEVITE—CHOSE THE EASIEST AND THE LEAST EXPENSIVE WAY, BUT THEY CHOSE THE WAY THAT PAID THE LEAST AND REPRESENTED TRUE BENEVOLENCE THE POOREST.

It cost the good Samaritan something to render this help. It cost him the loan of his beast while he himself walked. He made use of his sandals, the good Samaritan did, while he gave the other man his saddle. It cost him the price of the oil, even the oil itself, for he "poured in oil." It cost him the price of the wine which he "poured in." It cost him the price of the bandages which he used in binding up the fellow's wounds. It cost him

whatever he had to pay at the inn where he left the man. It cost him something to get the man to the inn. He, like the priest and the Levite, might have passed by on the other side. The good Samaritan, had he spoken his thoughts, would have said something like this: "Well, I will stand whatever cost comes to me. My business can take care of itself, for awhile. I may be accused of this robbery if I am found here with this man. I may even be robbed myself. It may cost me a great deal before I finish with this bruised, broken, bloody fellow; but this man should be helped—and I am going to help him no matter what it costs me."

He was not helping either as one who is helpful before the footlights. He was not giving and helping to be seen and honored of men. He was not helping that he might secure some coveted position. He was not giving his oil and wine and money and bandages and his beast to "bring grist to his own mill." He was not doing any of this that he might "feather his own nest." He was not doing this that he might relieve himself from personal service. No, for with his own hands he put the man on, and held him on, and took him on to the inn. And all he did cost him something.

But it cost the priest and the Levite nothing in oil, nothing in wine, nothing in bandages, nothing in money, nothing in personal inconvenience, nothing in any business transaction which was delayed —nothing in material things at all. And we find

many today who, because of the cost, pass by on the other side. They would be willing to be "good Samaritans" if it did not cost some "wine and oil" by the roadside and "the two pence" at the inn. Many desire the praise that came to that good Samaritan and the praise that comes to all such who live today, but they are not willing to "pay the price"—not willing to make the sacrifice for the joy that comes with sacrifice. However, the priest and the Levite, missed much "pay" and robbed themselves of much joy.

And it is always true that the least expensive side is often the costliest side. It costs to be good Samaritans in this "highway that leads to a great eternity," but it costs more not to be. It costs to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom in this world; it costs more not to do so. It will cost a young man or a young woman to get an education; it will cost much more not to. It will cost any man in this world to be a Christian, out and out, snow-white and sky-blue, but it will cost him lots more not to be. None of love's labors are lost—when that love expends itself in "unquestionable unselfishness." It will cost a man to work his crop; it will cost more not to do so. It cost Abraham to get from his kindred and his country "into the land God would show him." It would have cost him much more had he not done so.

It cost Moses to "refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." It cost him to "choose rather

to suffer affliction with the people of God, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasure of Egypt," but because he did make a great refusal and a great choice and did esteem the things worth while—because he "paid the price"—his wonderful life can be placed side by side with him who so nobly said; "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ, yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord!" (Phil. 3:7-8). Yes, and the life of Moses resembles the course of the sun, "rising in beauty, going forth in power, shining more and more unto the perfect day." And his death resembles the setting of the sun, going down in a sea of glory, setting only to shine in the firmament beyond!

And more we might say! But as we think of the joy that came to the good Samaritan, as we think of the "rejoicing that would not remove from his own heart," let us read again the parable of the good Samaritan, remembering that, as Mrs. Browning says:

"Thy love shall chant its own beatitudes
After its own life workings;
A child's kiss set on thy sighing lips shall make thee glad;
A poor man helped by thee shall make thee rich;
A sick man nursed by thee shall give thee health;
A weak one helped by thee shall give thee strength;
An ignorant one taught by thee shall make thee wise;

Thou shalt be served thyself
By every sense of service which thou renderest!"

And may we not forget as we go forth again upon the highways of life, where many are left destitute and robbed and bruised and broken, where we see ten thousand tragedies of sin, that the least expensive side is the costliest often, and that we represent him poorest who gave himself for men when we pass by on the other side, keeping our "wine and oil and money" for ourselves, riding our "lone saddle alone." May we hear Jesus saying to us across the centuries, "Inasmuch as ye do it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye do it unto me."

May we be willing to be "neighbors to them that fall among thieves" by going and doing as the good Samaritan did! "Go thou, and do likewise!"

And may I drop into your hearts, along with the parable, as "good seed sown in good ground," to bring forth "some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundredfold," this bit of truth in poetry?—

"Lord, must I bear the whole of it?"
"Even as I was crucified, my son!"

"Will it suffice if I the thorn crown wear?"
"To take the scourge my shoulders were made to bear?"

"My hands, O Lord, must I be nailed in both?"
"Twain gave I to the hammers, nothing loath!"

"But sure, O Lord, my feet need not be nailed?"
"Had mine not been then love had not prevailed!"

"What need I more, O Lord, to do my part?"
"Only the spear-point in thy broken heart!"

III

SLEEPING IN HARVEST

"He that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame." —Prov. 10:5.

Frequently I think of the solemnity of midnight. Midnight—when the stars keep sentinel duty on those battle fields of the skies where once "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera." Midnight—when the veil between the frail present and the eternal future grows thin. Midnight—when the chariot wheels of vanity roll here and there. Midnight—when vice and misery are abroad. Midnight—when even an atheist almost believes in God. Midnight—when the whole world stands "black and breathless as a nun!" Midnight—when there is oft stillness like the terrible stillness of heartbreak. Midnight—when the pitiless and passionless eyes of worlds beyond ours burn man's nothingness into man. Midnight—which is the outlaw's opportunity and the burglar's day. Midnight—which is the black mantle under which light-shunning theft and vile felony, murder and shameful deceit, as comrades, travel abroad. Midnight—which bad men love, because their deeds are evil. Midnight—

which good men love, because of Him who reigneth above the darkness. No wonder Lowell said: "O, wild and wondrous midnight, there is a might in thee to make the charmed body almost like spirit, and give it some faint glimpses of immortality!"

But beyond the wonders of the midnight to me is the mysterious wonder of sleep. When sleep comes to eyes, the whole body is ruled. The feet walk not, the hands lose their skill and are at rest, the ears hear not, the tongue seldom speaks—when sleep sets up her throne on the eyes. Wonderful sleep. Sleep—which is meat for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, rest for the weary, recreating for the wasted. Sleep—which makes the shepherd equal to the monarch, the fool equal to the wise. Sleep—which is so deathlike we dare not trust ourselves to it without prayer. Sleep—which is to the homeless a home, and to the friendless a friend. Sleep—which receives obedience from the babe in the cradle and from the criminal on the jail cot. Sleep—which is a welcome visitor in the palace and in the hut, on the farm and in the city, on the sea and on the land.

"Sleep, that knits up the raveled sleeve of care;
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath:
Balm of hurt minds; great nature's second course;
Chief nourisher in life's feast!"

Sleep—which is pain's easiest salve, and doth fulfill all the offices of death except to kill. Sleep—

the antechamber of death. Sleep! In it oppressors soothe their angry brows. In it the oppressed forget tyrannic power. In it the wretch condemned is equal to the judge. In it the sad forget their sorrows, the bereaved their losses.

I—THE VALUE OF SLEEP.

The fact of sleep we do not deny. Every living creature this earth has known and does now know sleeps. The white cranes of the air and the black monsters of the sea sleep. The minnow of the shallow rill sleeps. The whale of the ocean sleeps. The fishes in the coral parlors of the deep sleep. The creeping things in the mud sepulchres of the ocean sleep. The serpents in the slime of the earth sleep. The beasts in the jungles sleep. The swine in the wallow holes, the sheep of the pasture lands, and the cattle on a thousand hills sleep. The gulls which float on the sea waves and the eagles which nest on the pinnacles of the crags sleep. The sparrows of the hedges and the fowls of the barnyard sleep. The fool and the philosopher, the soldier and the sailor, the prince and the pauper, the queen and the washerwoman, the king and the clown, the plowman and the poet—all these sleep.

The necessity of sleep we do not deny. As water is a necessity for the flesh, as food is a necessity for the stomach, as air is a necessity for the lungs, as light is a necessity for the eye, as garments are a necessity for the body, as rain is a necessity for the

fields, as fire is a necessity for roasting—so sleep is a necessity for all.

The rich man could live without servants, but not without sleep. The king could live without royal attendants, but not without sleep. The beggar could live without a bed, but not without sleep. The scholar could live without pen or books, but not without sleep. The athlete could live without training, but not without sleep. The child could live without play, but not without sleep. We could live without the sense of sight and the sense of hearing and the sense of touch and the sense of smelling, but not without sleep. Always indispensable is sleep.

The blessing of sleep we do not deny. If we could not sleep when the muscles are sore and the body tired and the mind all a-fag how wretched we would be. "The sleep of a laboring man is sweet." If we could not sleep in sorrow—how full of torture the nights would be. If trouble or pain or distress or grief kept us forever awake—not long could we live. The one experience common to all—the experience of Abraham "mid the deep darkness," the experience of Jacob at Bethel and of Daniel in the den and of David in the sheep pastures and of Jesus on the ship and of Nero on the throne—is the experience of sleep. All men everywhere, in frozen north lands and in sweltering tropic places, acknowledge the blessing of sleep. What the river is to the desert, transforming it, is sleep to the body, bringing recuperation and a rebuilding of the waste

places. What the mother's milk-full breast is to the child, giving it nourishment, is sleep to the tired body, giving it new life. What the anesthetic is to the pain-ridden limb, giving oblivious rest, is sleep to the sorrow-smitten mind and heart, giving new strength.

One of the most excruciating tortures of the Dark Ages was the walking agony—the keeping of prisoners awake until they became gibbering idiots or fell dead before their inquisitors. Life without the complete relaxation of sleep is impossible, unthinkable. Yes, sleep is a friend. And sleep may be an enemy. Like many another blessing from God, it can be misused and turned against us. Which brings us to the place where and when we are ready to say:

II—THERE ARE TIMES WHEN SLEEP IS SINFUL AND SHAMEFUL.

This the text surely teaches. This observation can truly shout from the housetops. This experience can make known in the inner chamber. This history loudly proclaims. This we ourselves know. Sleep, the necessity, the blessing, the indispensable experience can be at times and does become at times, sinful, dishonorable, shameful, a thing of the devil, the unwanted badge of disgrace. "He that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame!" Sleep is a blessing and harvest is a blessing. But to sleep in harvest is to brand ourselves as sons and daughters of shame.

The nurse must sleep, but for her to close her eyes in sleep when her patient's condition demands strict and constant attention is dangerous for the patient and shameful for her.

The surgeon must sleep, but he is criminally negligent if he sleeps when his patient has been prepared for the knife. A son of shame indeed is he—if he is asleep when he should be alertly awake to tie a severed artery or to set a broken bone.

The policeman must sleep. But he is inexcusably careless of the welfare of others, shamefully slothful in his protective position, if he goes to sleep while assassins sneak about, while thieves break through and steal.

The fireman must sleep, but not when the city burns. Nay, not even when one small cottage is being eaten up by flames. For a fireman to turn again to his pillow while the fire alarm rings in his ears is shamefully worthless.

The engineer must sleep. But not when he is at the throttle—not while his engine plunges through the midnight or sweeps along at noonday. Death to himself and death to others and damage to property would result from such diabolic disregard.

The soldier must sleep. But he must not, he dare not, sleep when he is on sentinel duty. Surely doth the penalty of death descend upon him who sleeps when he ought to be watching from the city walls or from the lonely outpost. Teaching us what? That there are times when sleep, sleep

the necessity and sleep the blessing, is dangerous and dishonorable and inexcusable.

The captain of the ship must sleep. But poor captain is he who sleeps when icebergs adrift or storm clouds all arise on the horizon or furious winds lash the seas demand constant and keen watchfulness.

The signal man in the railroad tower must sleep —sometimes. But never should he be so recreant to trust as to sleep when on duty, when fast trains hurtle in sight and signal for closed switches.

The lighthouse keeper must sleep. But how great a menace is he to the ships seeking to avoid the rocks and the shallow shore if he sleeps when the lamps are unlit and the signal lights false.

The mother must sleep, but not when her child's life depends on her being awake and wakeful. How cruel would that mother be should she sleep while her child, with no language but a cry, called to her for help in the battle with disease. What a shame would careless or intentional sleep be.

The shepherd must sleep, but not when wolves and coyotes prowl about snatching lambs from folds here and there. How unlike a true shepherd is any shepherd who sleeps while wild animals drink fountains of blood from the throats of his flocks.

The watchman on the walls must sleep—at times. But never when the enemy seeks to enter the gates of the city by strategy or open attack.

The life savers on the wave-washed and storm-

beaten shores of our land must sleep. But how utterly cowardly is it for them to sleep when from out the ghostly pallor of the sea there comes the signal of a crippled ship—when from out the howling uproar of the storm a human voice calls in distress.

The preacher must sleep. But he must not sleep when in the dead of night a dying man calls for someone to show him the way from darkness to light, from bondage to liberty—not when a breaking heart with its cry awakes him seeking comfort. Nor must he sleep when theological snipers from behind pulpits and college chairs attack God's word —nor when false teachers in sheeps' clothing are about, seeking whom they may devour.

Jonah had to sleep. But he ought not to have been asleep on a ship going to Tarshish when God wanted him in Nineveh preaching to that great city, God's message. The five virgins had to sleep. But how foolish they were to sleep while the bridegroom tarried, while they had no oil in their lamps. Abner had to sleep. But had he been true to his king he would not have slept when it was his business to watch while God's anointed slept. Eutychus had to sleep. But how unfortunate and tragic that he slept while Paul, the great genius and the great preacher, opened the treasure house of God's truth. The tragedy represented in that twentieth chapter of Acts lies in the fact that Eutychus was able to sleep in the presence of a preacher to whose voice twenty centuries have intently listened. Paul was an orator

who today is recognized as the greatest preacher who ever proclaimed the Gospel of Christ, and while this great world genius preached there sat in the window a certain young man named Eutychus, "being fallen into a deep sleep." And what that young man did at Troas, many have done when the time came to gather sheaves of truth.

Over in Athens once a man, a great man with eyes that saw afar, talked in the market places to the young men about the destiny of their souls. But they, "asleep in harvest time," led him to jail, forced the poison cup upon him, and ushered him out of the world. Then, too, you remember how there came into Florence Dante and the great Savonarola, one a mighty poet who could reach from pole to pole with the outstretched wings of his poetic powers, one burning with eloquence vividly like a volcano in eruption at midnight. But the people were asleep in the day of harvest. They treated as garbage the principles of life conduct spread before them like ripe harvest fields by men who saw afar. And they of Florence flung themselves like folks in the ravings of nightmares, to thrust them out of the city, or to burn them in the public square, for the delectation of a sordid and stupid populace shamefully asleep in the time of harvest. Truly "He that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame!"

And so they of the days of Jesus, in a sort of stupid somnambulism, thrust Jesus out of their synagogue and out of their village. Disgracefully

asleep in harvest they! And when he was hanging stretched upon the Cross, about him were a lot of stupefied folk with heavy eyelids seeing nothing in the most tragic event in the history of the world. What did it matter to the Roman soldiers, gambling at the foot of the Cross, with "their callous intellects and thoughts as torpid as the rusty waters of a sluggish stream," that the sun went down at noon and the earth was darkened in the clear day (Amos 8:9)? In the moment that the Son of God forgave the thief, and offered his prayer to the Father, and breathed his last, these stupid men, blindly asleep with wide-open eyes, all unconscious of the eternal value of things, were concerned only with the coat of the Carpenter. Sons of shame they were, forever pilloried in the contempt of the world, as those who slept in the harvest days!

III—SLEEP IN HARVEST CAUSETH SHAME.

Why? Because it shows a lack, a shameful lack, of a sense of responsibility. How sad, how tragic, how shameful it is when fields are ripe unto the harvest—and many feel no sense of responsibility as to gathering in the sheaves.

Yonder on Mt. Carmel while Elijah prayed, Ahab went up to eat and to drink. Ahab had no sense of responsibility. Elijah did. Within the sacred precincts of the church the Ahab spirit and the Elijah spirit may be found. Some, in the face of great harvest fields, sit down to eat and drink, and rise

up to play. Many disport themselves on the seashore—half clad and half pleasure mad. Some roam the hills and dash at the risk of their lives in speeding motor cars along every highway. Many lounge in clubs and hotel lobbies. Many lie abed at home. Many are habitual screen gazers. Many sit in stupid idleness, all unheedful of the long spiritual drouth and of the consequent need and famine of the world. If the preacher preaches to varnish —what matters it? If the "little foxes" spoil the vines in the Lord's vineyard—what matters it? If ripened fields go waste—what matters it? If Kingdom plans die at birth—what matters it? If the gospel chariot wheels lag—what matters it? If men die in the miry clay—what do they care? If worms of sin are gnawing at the fairest flowers in the garden of life—what do they care? The spirit of Ahab is theirs. They are interested only in what will minister to the senses or give them ease and physical pleasure.

But praise be to God—the Elijah spirits are among us, too. There are those who from their purses hire men to go forth into the ripe harvest fields. There are those who sharpen the scythes for those who bend their backs to the reaping. There are those who furnish twine for those who do the binding. There are those who sweep the garners when the sheaves are to be brought in. There are those who stand up and out and against the prophets of Baal—and feel the responsibility. We do have

our Elijahs who climb to the summit of Carmel and bow their faces between their knees and pray for the church and for the youth of our land and for the salvation of America, feeling a great responsibility. There are those who climb to the Carmels of their communities, and in God's houses of prayer have confessed their sins and prayed for and worked for the peace and progress of mankind and the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ.

Why does sleep in harvest cause shame? Because the harvest will not wait. Harvest time is crisis time. This crisis must be vigorously and promptly met. Grain once ripe must be gathered in at once or it will fall to the ground and be lost. "There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at its flood, leads on to fortune." Doors once opened but unentered may close again. Minds made susceptible but not won for Christ may turn away and become hardened. Truth resisted once is easier to resist next time, you know. We must strike while the iron is hot. It is now or never—when the harvest is ripe and ready for the reaping.

Why are those who sleep in harvest sons and daughters who cause shame? Because the harvest will not reap itself. The harvest needs men—to reap in the high places. The harvest needs women—to glean in the corners. The harvest needs men and women to gather it in. When the harvest is on—how shameful it is when the church itself is a

cemetery where the living sleep above the ground and the dead beneath the ground.

There is no time for play when the harvest is ripe. To sleep in harvest time is to sleep in a time of supreme need. This is what the disciples did that night, that awful night, when Jesus was in prayer in Gethsemane, in blood-sweating agony in Gethsemane. They slept in the time of urgent need.

Now a man asleep is useless. He toils not, neither does he spin. A man asleep has lost his savor. No use to make impassioned appeal to him about God's most daring enterprise, for he is asleep. He cannot be used in any program in the church, for he is deaf to all the holier calls. He is blind to all the loftier visions. He is a spiritual nonentity. He does not count. He weighs nothing on God's scales of requirement. He is as powerless as a tombstone—as impotent as spots of dried blood. The church needs him; God needs him; every good cause needs him. But he is asleep.

Robert Browning says: "Be sure they sleep not whom God needs!" God wants us spiritually wide awake today. His program is so tremendous and so colossal that it should enlist the heart and hand of everyone. Oh, it is our shame today and may be our lasting shame in death that God needed us —and we slept. "He that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame."

Back to Gethsemane's garden! We can be awake when it is too late. It was so with the disciples

whom Jesus told to watch that night. That night in the garden when the "sufferings of Christ's soul formed the soul of his sufferings," Jesus came to those whom he had asked to watch and found them asleep. He cometh the third time and findeth them asleep, and he said "Sleep on now!" Sleep on—and take your rest. The hour was past—for them. The fine opportunity was gone. Those three disciples might have done something an hour ago that is now impossible to them—forever. If they had been awake, they might have comforted the Son of God in the grim loneliness of his agony. But! It is too late now. Too late to give one bit of sympathy to the suffering heart. Too late to wipe away one drop of the bloody sweat. Too late to share the agony of the soul "exceeding sorrowful unto death." Too late to comfort him now. God had sent an angel to do what they had had the chance to do and failed to do. Samson awoke, but it was to find his strength gone.

Christ is saying with pathos indescribable to you and to me today: "Can you not arouse yourselves from your sleep, shake yourselves from this lethargy of death, and watch with me in this great harvest night?" Men and brethern, are we acting as we ought to act in the time of harvest? Men and women, are we saying with the disciples of old, "Four months and then the harvest?" Or are we throwing our God-given energies and resources unreservedly into this great enterprise for God and for

souls at this crucial hour? Is the harvest song in our hearts and the harvest blades in our hands while the "fields are white unto the harvest"?

O heart, heart, know ye not that while you are asleep the forces of evil are stirring, planning, organizing, marching with their swords and staves to humiliate the Son of God in a malicious night attack? "Be sure they sleep not whom God needs!" "He that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame!" "Awake, thou that sleepest!"

IV

THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST

"Without the shedding of blood there is no remission."—Heb. 9:22.

Interwoven in the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation is a scarlet thread—the story of redemption. Only as we consider that red road do we properly understand the story of Man's sin and the Cross of Christ. Overlook that scarlet thread in your reading of the Bible; ignore its fact in your religious life; remove it from your thought, and you have no Christianity. Without knowledge of that scarlet thread we have no knowledge of the supreme theme of the Bible—and we are ignorant of the full price he paid for human redemption.

Pitching our mental tents around Genesis the third chapter and the twenty-first verse, we must consider the first glimpse of blood. "Unto Adam also and his wife did God make coats of skins, and clothed them!" It was impossible for God to clothe Adam and Eve with the skins of beasts unless he had shed blood. It was, as many have said, and as many believe, a case of the innocent slain for the guilty.

Coming on from the Old Testament into the New Testament, we pause at the twenty-eighth verse of the twenty-sixth chapter of Matthew's Gospel. That night, with the shadow of the Cross looming darkly and immediately ahead, yonder in the upper room Jesus took the cup, filled and burning with red wine, that red wine glowing like flaming coals in a miniature furnace, and said: "This is my BLOOD of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Or, expressed in another way, "This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the discharging of the penalty of sin—for the paying off of the terrible debt of sin!"

And, passing from this verse, we travel on until we come to the verse, gleaming like a jewel in a casket of jewels, in the treasure house of the book of Hebrews: "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission!"

And, as we think on this verse, let us insist that it is no mere Jewish maxim. It is not the slight urging of a light proverb. It is not the fragment of a half-forgotten song to be lightly sung for mere entertainment. It is no mere advertising poster that calls attention to things we can choose or leave alone, as we see fit. It is no mere menu card where we can choose what suits and refuse what does not appeal to our tastes. It is a world-wide, eternal truth. It pertaineth not to the Hebrews only, but to the Gentiles, Greeks, Scythians, barbarians, bond and free, likewise. Never in any hour gone forever

into the tomb of time has anyone received remission of sins apart from the shedding of blood. Never in any hour that is yet to come from the womb of time will anyone know remission apart from the shedding of blood. The sun by day and the moon by night shine not upon any land where there has ever been the remission of sins without the shedding of blood. "Never, in any person, can there be remission apart from the shedding of blood. The great fact is stamped on nature; it is an essential law of God's moral government; it is one of the fundamental principles which can neither be shaken or denied!"

But as we pitch our mental tents upon and spread our heart meditations around this text at this hour, we must understand first that this text has in mind the pointing out of

I—SPECIAL BLOOD.

Not of the blood of the first plague which smote Egypt, when the Nile river from source to sea was blood, when every little fountain gushed blood, when every little stream ran blood, when the water in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone was blood, when the water in the ivory bath tubs of Pharaoh was red like the drain pipes in a slaughter pen full of blood, when "there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt," and "all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink." Not that blood!

Not the blood of beasts slain at the temple dedication when Solomon "offered a sacrifice of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep," when the people, "a very great congregation from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt," came to the dedication services of the magnificent house which went up from the lowest stone in its foundation to the topmost roof edge without sound of hammer or saw. Not that blood!

Not the blood shed when Herod slew the babies under two years of age. Not that blood shed then. Not the blood of helpless little children snatched from the arms of their mothers, and slain in cottage and palace, in street and on lawn. Not that blood!

Not the blood shed when Joseph's brothers took the coat of many colors, every color subdued by the blood of a kid, to Jacob. Not that blood! Not the blood shed that night of the arrest when Peter drew a sword and cut off the ear of Malchus. Not that blood! Not the blood, the rivers of blood, the ponds of blood, shed in the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, in Paris, on August 24, 1572. What a day was that! A little past midnight, a tolling bell announced the hour when the sword and the butcher's blade were to awake—and for three days the massacre went on within the city, spreading then to the countries round about. But not the blood of the hundred thousand people shed in one of the most awful crimes of history. Not that blood!

Not the blood shed in the destruction of Jerusalem, in 70 A. D., when Titus Vespasian destroyed the city and one million Jews perished within the walls outside which Jesus had been crucified. Not that blood shed when "there were not trees enough in the forests for crosses nor room in the earth to hold crosses when erected!" Not that blood. Not the blood shed in the French Revolution of 1792 when eighteen hundred men and women of royal blood lost their heads on the greedy guillotine in the September massacre. No, not that blood. Not the blood shed in our own land in those years when millions of men marched Southward and millions of men marched Northward and met in death struggle fierce and awful—and sweet Southern blood and brave Northern blood, streams of it, was shed. Not that blood.

Not the blood of Paul, which soaked the dust of the guillotine, nor the blood of Latimer and Cranmer, which simmered in the fire, nor the blood of high-souled martyrs, which reddened the mouths of lions in the Coliseum—no, not that blood! But the blood that "cleanseth from all sin," being sinless, the blood of the slain Lamb of God "that taketh away the sin of the world." That blood! That blood! The blood "that flowed from Immanuel's veins." The blood that "cleanses us from all unrighteousness," being righteous blood. The blood which came from the blood-shedding which does all other shedding of blood far outvie—precious blood!

Go quietly, with thy shoes from off thy feet, into Gethsemane. See Jesus there! Drops of blood streaming down his face and oozing from his body. Every pore, like a wee gate that will not stay shut, is open and blood comes out. What strange sweat! Not the sweat of men who earn their bread by "the sweat of their brow"! Not the sweat of men who exhaust their strength in athletic struggle. It is the sweat of One whose "soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death." The sweat of One who was "made sin in our behalf," himself knowing no sin! The Gethsemane blood is the blood without which there is no remission.

Follow him to Pilate's court. With the cold-heartedness with which men drag oxen forth to the slaughter pen, they have dragged him with sacrilegious hands from the place of his prayer, from the place of his agony, from the place where the shuddering necessity of a world's sin rolled in upon his soul, and they have taken him to Pilate's judgment hall. In merciless mockery, they put upon him a purple robe. In unmatched cruelty, they put a crown of thorns upon his brow and press it down, regarding not the nerves it tears and the arteries it punctures. And, AND, crimson drops are staining the cheeks that never blushed for shame, cheeks white now like a hawthorn blossom. This is the shedding of blood without which there is no remission of your sin, of my sins, of all sins!

But, if the sight be not too much for you, look

again! Hark! Do you hear something hissing like adders in flame? It is the sound of the merciless steel lashes of Pilate's scourge biting into his flesh. Do you hear a sound as of threads breaking in a tangled loom? It is the scourge tearing his flesh as eagles tear with sharp talons and trenchant beaks the tender flesh of captive lamb. Do you hear a sound as of water dripping from low eaves? It is his blood dripping from his body to the marble floor. And this is the blood without which there is no remission.

But, come and sit down and watch him there, out yonder on the Cross. Look! With earth and hell and heaven as witnesses, in agony unknown he bleeds his life away; in terrible throes he exhausts his soul as his soul is made an "offering for sin"! And while the sun in the heavens refuses to look on that dread scene, the Son of God bleeds from his palms, from his feet, where the nails went, from the brow where the thorns are, from the side where the savage spear went. This is the shedding of blood, the awful shedding of blood, the terrible pouring out of blood, without which, for you, for me, for the whole human race, there is no remission.

II—THE ONLY WAY.

The only way is pointed out to us in this text. God leaves no room for evasion. God gives no chance for choosing any other thing as our preference. This is certain—"no remission without the

shedding of blood." This is God's certain word—"No remission without the shedding of blood." This gives no place for compromise, no place for changing loose expediences for heavenly mandates, no place for diluting the stringency of God's edict. Positively decisive is the truth of these words.

But one man says: "But is God's heart so hard that he is not moved to extend mercy when he sees one in tears? May I not weep and prevail upon God through many tears to forgive me?" No. God says nothing about remission through tears. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission!"

"Could my tears forever flow,
Could my zeal no languor know,
All for sin could not atone—
Thou must save, and Thou alone!"

Another man says, forgetting that we work from the Cross and not to the Cross: "But if I give all my goods to feed the poor and make many days of my life days of almsgiving, will not God forgive me for being kind to the poor and for giving my money to help the needy?" The text is very plain: "No remission without the shedding of blood."

Others ask: "But if we give ourselves zealously to cultural advancement, will not God forgive us for our development in culture?" "No remission without the shedding of blood!" God permits no quibbling with that statement.

Others ask: "But we observe the Golden Rule,

ever doing unto others as we would have them do unto us. Will not God forgive us for our obedience?" Just as well ask, "Can a fish swim without water?" The text is so plain that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein—"No remission without the shedding of blood!" Another, much troubled and very anxious, asks: "But surely if God is merciful he will save me without the shedding of blood!" And still the text rings out in no uncertain tones: "No remission without the shedding of blood." What can wash away our stain, our black, dark, foul sin stain? Nothing but the blood of Jesus! What can make us, foul as we are with the loathsome leprosy of sin, whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus! What can set us, shackled as we are with the galling bonds of sin, free forever? Nothing but the blood of Jesus! "We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Eph. 1:7 and Col. 1:14).

"The blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all unrighteousness." It is good for a man to live and to die in the hope of that verse. If any man live not in the hope of that verse, he is basing his hopes on quicksands that will swallow him up. If any man die not in that hope, his pillow will be one of hard stones which no hand can smooth and make soft. If any man walk not in the light of that verse, he is building for himself a dungeon whose walls are confusion and whose only light is darkness. If any man rejoice not in the blessed truth

of that verse, his ears are deaf to the sweetest song of all.

Let us turn and pluck a wondrous flower from the great Scripture garden. In Exodus the twelfth chapter, we read that on the night when God passed through Egypt executing judgment upon the first born, he kept the promise he had made to the children of Israel, namely: "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt!" (Ex. 12:13). The blood on the doorposts kept the destroyer away from the houses of the Israelites. Where the blood was not, the first born died. And—mark this—had they put jewels on the side posts and diamonds in the lintels of the doors it would not have kept the destroyer away. Had rubies gleamed like red flames from every door, had diamonds shone like miniature suns from every side post, had silver and gold covered all the posts it would not have availed for the saving and protection of the first born. Only the blood made the death angel pass over. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you!" Nothing but the blood.

Let us pluck and scrutinize another wondrous flower from the garden of the Scriptures. In the book of Joshua Rahab was told by the spies this: "Thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by; and thou

shalt bring thy father and thy brethren and all thy father's household, home to thee; and it shall be that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless, and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be upon our head, if any hand be upon him!" (Josh. 2:18).

And on that fatal day when Joshua's army came, blood flowed abundantly. The city was burnt with fire and all that therein was, "only the silver and the gold and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord . . . and Joshua saved Rahab . . . alive . . . and her father's house—and all that she had" (Josh. 6:25). The scarlet line in the window saved them. Had they been in any other house; had they depended on anything else; had they put their trust in anything else; had they fastened their hopes on any other house and on any other window and on any other line their cries would have gone up with those who perished in the flames, and their blood would have flowed with the blood of man and beast as the gutters of the city ran red. That was the only way. And that scarlet line in Rahab's window emphasizes the text: "No remission without the shedding of blood."

III—NO REMISSION WITHOUT THE SHEDDING OF BLOOD PUTS ALL ON THE SAME LEVEL.

"This is my blood of the new contract which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt.

26:28). "No remission without the shedding of blood!"

What mountains of pride and conceit those words bring low! The fact that there is no remission without the shedding of blood makes all equal before God. It puts the Chinaman eating rats in Hongkong on the level with the millionaire eating canvasback duck in the Waldorf-Astoria. It puts the Esquimau feasting on putrid blubber amid the ice floes of the North on the same level with the cultured professor teaching trigonometry. It puts the red man with his savage war whoop on the level with the operatic performer who sings solos at a thousand dollars each. It puts the queen in the palace on a level with her washerwoman. It puts the stokers in the bowels of the ship on equal footing with the captain on the deck. It puts the banker with his millions on the same plane with the boy who blacks his boots. It makes the woman with pearls and palaces no higher than the working girl who stands behind the counter. It puts all on equal standing. "God is no respecter of persons!" The blood considered, the lord of an estate is no bigger than his coachman. The blood considered, the minister is on the same plane with the janitor. There are no "upper deck" and "steerage" passengers. There are no "first class" and "second class" coaches. There are no "ladies first" nor "millionaires to the front" nor "beggars last" in the plan of salvation.

"Without the shedding of blood there is no remission"—no matter how much richer nor how much more cultured nor how much more educated nor how much more honored nor how much more popular than others you may be. There is no hope for the best without this shedding of blood. There is no hope for the worst without this shedding of blood. There is no hope for the bedraggled beggar without this shedding of blood. There is no hope for the money magnate without this shedding of blood. There is no hope for any without this shedding of blood. I believe it was Spurgeon who said: "Put up your money bags—they will not procure remission; put away your bonds—they will not secure remission; roll up your diplomas—they will not secure remission; forget your farm and barns filled with plenty—they will not get you remission; boast not of your superior culture—it will not get you remission; cover up that escutcheon—that coat of arms will not get you remission; look away from that family tree—it will not bring you remission; record not thy deeds of philanthropy—these will not get you remission! And come, ye ragged beggars, filthy offscouring of the world, penniless! Come hither! Here is remission as much for you, ill-bred, ill-mannered though ye be, as for the noble, the honorable, the titled, and the wealthy!"

Yes, all stand on a level here. For "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God!" It is not by weighing our merits, not by measuring our

worth, not by claiming culture, but by the shed blood we have remission!

IV—A QUESTION: IS THERE NOT SOMETHING AWFUL TO SAVE MEN FROM?

If there is no remission without shedding of blood, is there not something awful to save men from, something more terrible than words can say, something sufficiently terrible to make us to stop and consider, to open our eyes, to look behind and before, to open our ears to the warnings of God? Yes! And that awful thing is hell—hell where the smoke of the torment of the damned ascendeth up forever! Hell—"the lake of fire"—"outer darkness"—"bottomless pit"—reality more terrible than any words used to impress the reality upon the minds of men!

Calvary is meaningless unless we see its necessity! God put Calvary with its blood-stained Cross and blood-drenched slopes across the path of every hell-bound, hell-deserving sinner. But Calvary is meaningless, a place of sound and fury signifying nothing, unless we have eyes to see and hearts to understand its necessity.

"But," somebody asks, "you don't believe in a literal hell—do you?" Well, dear friend, this is eternally true: If the language be figurative, as some claim, the reality which the figurative language pictures is more terrible than the darkest words can describe. Granted that the language is figurative, let me say by taking the language figuratively we

do not lessen that terror of hell, hell with its intensity of agony, hell with its eternity of duration. No! To a rightly constituted mind, the figure is always less than the reality.

And now, let me ask a question. This: Have you really seen the dark, deeply dark, dreadfully dark, background of John three sixteen? Preachers and teachers everywhere dwell often on that verse. And mighty verse it is—a veritable river in a desert—a sun in a world of darkness. But there is one word we overlook entirely too much in that verse, a word mightily and vividly terrible, even the word "PERISH!" We skip lightly over that word oftentimes. With glad hearts we speak of the great love that loved us while we were yet sinners. But, rapturously exultant amid the glories of the text, we see not enough nor point out enough the dark, the distressingly dark, background. Never darker background dwelt behind brighter foreground! Never blacker darkness reigned beyond more gorgeous sunrise! Never darker night ruled beyond the rim of wondrous day! Black night and black blackness indeed within the narrow limits of that one vivid and terrible word, "PERISH!" The darkness of the bottomless pit encircles that word! With black spears that verse opens our sluggish eyelids to the reality of a real and awful hell.

We have only to read the thirty-sixth verse of the third chapter of John to understand that hell is a constituent and essential part of universal atone-

ment. Mark ye: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him!" (John 3:36).

Yes, Calvary is a funny farce and a censurable comedy, unless we see the tragedy and necessity of it. The sinner can only meet mercy where the claim of justice was met, and that is at Calvary. In the Cross of Christ's atonement, every sin is met and conquered, every darkness met and dispelled, every iniquity met and killed, every question faced and answered, every foe faced and defeated, every fear met and quenched, every hunger satisfied, every longing fulfilled, every sorrow assuaged, and every promise kept. But we must see the dark background. "God so loved the world." How bright that! "That he gave." How bright and beautiful that! "His only begotten Son." How marvelously beautiful that! "That whosoever believeth on him!" How full of eternal brightness that! "Should not PERISH!" How deeply dark, how blacker than the blackest black, is that background pointed out by that word "PERISH"! That word —"PERISH"—enables us to see that it is salvation eternal or damnation eternal for all. That word—"PERISH"—makes us to consider the wrath of God. "But the wrath of God abideth on him!" It is the wrath of the Lamb, more terrible than the wrath of the lion. It is the wrath of gentleness against brutality; the wrath of kindness against

cruelty; the wrath of chastity against unchastity; the wrath of truth against falsehood; the wrath of holiness against sin; the wrath of love against hate; the wrath of light against darkness; the wrath of eternal righteousness against iniquity.

Yes, Calvary means, if it means anything, that there is something awful to save men from. It teaches to all the world that there is a place where men and women are "burning continually, yet unconsumed," "forever wasting yet enduring still, dying perpetually, yet never dead!" Calvary is but another vivid way of expressing what the Bible means by the "bottomless pit"—"forever falling without striking, forever sinking, forever growing worse, everlasting degeneration!" Calvary means there is a "lake of fire," a "bottomless pit," a terrible "outer darkness," a terrible eternity of agony to save men and women from, even a place where the "smoke of their torment ascendeth forever"—where "all death lives and all life dies"! Yes, the blood saves. And with the shedding of blood there is remission."

V—WHAT WE HAVE THROUGH THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

Consider what we have through the blood of Christ—if we believe.

Listen, ye believers. We have salvation and safety. "And the blood shall be for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood,

I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt" (Ex. 12:13). "For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintels, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come into your houses to smite you!" (Ex. 12:23). What a night was that—in Egypt.

Wherever a Jew exists upon the face of the earth, it is to this night, far in the past, that he points as the proudest epoch in his national history. That night the staff of the oppressor was broken, the rod of Pharaoh was snapped. And that night as many of the Israelites as were under the blood were safe, regardless of their feelings, regardless of what they thought, regardless of how utterly simple the method seemed. The blood saved them. It is God's estimate of the blood, not of us, that counts. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you!" That was the wondrous passover in Egypt. But Christ is our passover. "For even Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us!" (I Cor. 5:7).

Believers have redemption through his blood. Now redemption refers to the entire work of Jesus in delivering us from the guilt, the penalty, the power, the consequences, and the presence of sin. "Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold . . . but with the precious BLOOD OF CHRIST" (I Peter 1:18 and

19). "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by HIS OWN BLOOD, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:12). "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us by THY BLOOD out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation" (Rev. 5:9).

Believers have forgiveness of sins. "In whom we have redemption through the blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:14).

Believers have justification. "Much more being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. 5:9). And what is justification? It is that act of God whereby any sinner anywhere, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, is counted as perfectly righteous. Wondrous fact! And what is the ground of such justification and salvation? "Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his BLOOD, to declare his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:25, 26).

Believers have peace. "And having made PEACE through the blood of his Cross" (Col. 1:20). How little real peace there is in this clamorous world! Behind many a smiling face is a troubled heart. How we do need God's rest around

our restlessness—his completeness around our incompleteness! Through the blood of the Cross, we have a peace which nothing can take away, a joyful peace which no "rust or moth" can touch.

Believers are made nigh. "For now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of the Cross (Eph. 2:13). The sinner is far off; the blood makes him nigh to God. The blood takes away the chasm; the blood makes those who are strangers close friends. "Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Heb. 10:19).

Believers have cleansing from all sin. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:7). "To him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev. 1:5). "How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Heb. 9:14). And how do sinners come to a blessed position before the throne of God? "They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 7:14).

Believers overcome the devil. "And they overcome him (that is, the devil) by the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 12:11). It makes one's heart bleed to think of all the defeated men and women who face sundown without hope. But men and women can be "more than conquerors" and overcome the devil by the blood of the Lamb. "The God of peace . . . brought again from the dead our Lord

Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant" (Heb. 13:20).

Believers have a church purchased. "The church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). Did not the bride of the first Adam come from his side? Genesis two, twenty-one says so: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof!" So the church, the bride of Christ, the bride of the last Adam (I Cor. 15:45-47) came from his side, for from his side flowed blood and water (John 19:34).

No remission without the blood. But abundant and eternal remission with the blood. Blessed be God! "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!" Remission with the blood, not with money. Money is valuable for many things, but valueless in the securing of salvation for the soul. No man can buy his salvation; if he could, salvation would be a bargain counter matter, a purchasable commodity. It would do away with the one plan of humanity and the one plan of salvation. It would give the banker an advantage over the beggar.

But if money is not lawful tender, what is? The Bible has that in strikingly numerous places and in grippingly vivid chapters. Blood. Blood is the

only answer. The blood of bulls and goats? No. It must be sinless blood.

"Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain;
But Christ, the Heavenly Lamb,
Takes all our sins away,
A sacrifice of nobler name
And richer blood than they!"

As Talmadge expresses it: "The blood must be poured from royal arteries. But where is the King? I see many thrones and a great many occupants, yet none seem to be coming down to the rescue. But—after awhile—the clock in Bethlehem strikes twelve, and the silver pendulum of a star swings across the sky; and I see the King of Heaven rising up; and he descends! And he steps down from star to star, and from cloud to cloud, lower and lower, until he touches the sheep-covered hills, and then on to another hill like a skull, bearing his Cross with him; and there at the sharp stroke of persecution, a rill, red and holy, rushes down—and we who could not be redeemed by money are redeemed by precious and imperial blood!"

The blood in drops, falling like red rain from the Cross, was atoning blood. The blood in rills, pouring down like red wine from the crevices of a wine press, was cleansing blood. The blood, spreading

in crimson pools beneath the Cross, is sanctifying blood. The blood, splashing like shafts of red sunlight in the face of his enemies, is saving blood. And that blood is the price heaven paid to buy us who had "sold ourselves for naught."

> "Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
> Save in the death of Christ, my Lord;
> All the vain things that charm me most,
> I sacrifice them to His blood!"

May that be our prayer.

May that be the chief ambition of our hearts.

"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, vengeance is mine, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge the people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:28-31).

"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins *in HIS OWN BLOOD*, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever! Amen" (Rev. 1:5-6).

V

THE POSSIBILITIES OF A LIFE.

"Standing in the presence of some glorious cathedral or gallery, beholding the Parthenon or pyramids, gazing at the rugged mountains with their snow caps and cloud wraps, or viewing some wondrous landscape, the emotion and imagination of some men are sometimes so deeply stirred that men lose command of themselves and break into transports of admiration!"

This sentence, staring at me from the page of a recent book, drew me into an hour of reminiscence. During this hour I found myself linking together some hours of rare rapture that have blazed like suns of splendor across my pathway. These hours of rare rapture I shall mention.

A—WHEN I HAVE STUDIED THE HEAVENS, "THE WORK OF HIS FINGERS."

Hours of rare rapture indeed have been mine when I have watched the stars in golden armor and glowing helmets and with silver spears march out at the close of day and take up sentinel duty in those ancient fields where once "the stars in their course fought against Sisera"; when I have seen the comets flare and the meteors glare like some archangel with garments afire speeding across the uncharted

dark; when I have seen the moon come forth like some huge jonquil in the great garden of the patient stars; when I have seen the blue curtains of the night drawn across the windows of heaven and pinned together with star clusters by the invisible hands which in the beginning set the pillars of the earth in their sockets and, in redemption, were nailed to the Cross. When at night I have seen this, I have been held slave to the rapture that no words can express; and I have said: "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thine hands; they shall perish but Thou remainest; and they shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail!" (Heb. 1:11-12).

B—WHEN I HAVE STOOD NEAR, OR HAVE HELD IN MY HAND, SOME MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.

When in my hand I have held some delicate violin or cornet, when in home or house of God I have stood near some piano or great organ, hours of rare rapture have been mine in thinking of the possibilities of those musical instruments under the hands of some master musician. I stood once in a museum in Chicago and saw 177 different kinds of musical instruments from all the lands of the earth. And I forgot the hour and the place and the people in thinking what wondrous music would be heard if

some of the hands now folded in the dust of ancient tombs could return and play on those instruments as once they did when men and women went a-twozing in the shadows of Babylon's walls or made love in the twilight by the banks of the Nile.

Seeing a great harp, I wondered what possibilities would it show forth could David play as he played before King Saul. Seeing a piano covered with dust, I wondered what its possibilities would be could Beethoven or Mozart lay hold upon it. Counting the pipes of a great organ, I wondered what its full breath or slightest murmur would be if the keys were pressed beneath the fingers of Felix Mendelssohn. Holding a slender violin in my hand, I could faintly conceive of its possibilities under the hand of Ole Bull could he return and play as he did on his American tour, or as he played on his sixty-sixth birthday from the top of the pyramid Cheops, at the suggestion of King Oscar of Norway and Sweden.

C—WHEN I HAVE LOOKED AMONG THE MATERIALS OF THE ARTIST.

I have in shop window and in studio looked among the tubes of paints and brushes of hair and squares of cloth; and I have been stirred into enthusiasm when I thought on the possibilities of them were a master artist to use them—if only some artist of antiquity or some master of today would get them and use them. What possibilities if Apelles,

who painted grapes so wonderfully that birds picked at them on his canvas, and who stands at the head of all the painters of the world, would but take them and make them what they were capable of. If Apelles, who "feared no criticism and was unenvious of the fame of his rivals," could get hold of those little tubes and that hair brush and that coarse cloth whole landscapes would grow and glow under his master hand on that cloth. What possibilities in those tubes of paint were Millet or Hoffman to lay their hands to them! Mountains and moors, crags and cataracts, majestic steeps and starry stairways, surging seas and shining suns, gorgeous gardens and fair faces all bound up and hidden away in those tiny tubes, awaiting the master mind and the master hand! Rare rapture has been mine in thinking on these things.

D—WHEN I HAVE SEEN THE PEN OF SOME GREAT WRITER.

I have held a one-cent pen between my finger tips; and I have wondered what it could do if Browning with all his galloping vigor of verse were to use it—if Tennyson with all his lyrical talent were to write with it—if Boreham with his charming essayic power were to put it to work.

In Mobile, Alabama, on one occasion, standing in the room where Mrs. Augusta Evans Wilson died, I held in my hand for a brief, solemn minute the pen with which she wrote most of "St. Elmo!"

And I thought of the power of that bit of steel in her slender hand. And I thought how verses would drop from it like "golden pollen from the stems of shaken lilies" could Shakespeare use it! And I thought how philosophy would stream from it like streams of muddy or clear water were Aristotle to write with it. And I wondered at how foul odors would arise therefrom were some Smollett to smear over pages with it. And I thought how hymn after hymn would be born with its use were blind Fanny Crosby to return to earth and write again. What possibilities beyond all words to say! What allegories would race from it were Bunyan to write with it! What epics would leap forth were Milton to use it! What possibilities!

E—WHEN I HAVE CONSIDERED THE FORCES OF NATURE UNDER THE DIRECTION AND MASTERY OF MEN OF GENIUS.

Luther Burbank took the wild Arizona potato and crossed it and produced the famous Burbank potato. He took the wild beach plum, so tiny and gnarled and bitter that even animals, half-starved, would not eat it. He crossed it and made it into the beautiful, delicious, juicy Japanese plum, five hundred times as large as the original beach plum. He took the wild cactus, with its poison veins, its bitter taste, its thorns, and its ugliness, and he made it into an edible, a sweet and useful food for animals. "There are no outcasts to Luther Burbank!" What

powers in plants under the hand of this wizard and master.

Through the scientific skill of inventors, the lawless torrent is bridled and invested with power, rivers are vagrants trained and taught to serve our wills, oranges are made to grow in the snow, and ice is made in the tropics. Master minds and hands that hold the mastery have made a messenger boy of the lightning. Words flash from ships separated by oceans; Caruso is compressed into the microscopic point of a needle; hairs from infant heads are weighed! With the telescope which magnifies the power of the human eye 400,000 times, we view landscapes fifteen million miles away. With the microscope we behold electrons whirling in atoms like bees around a hive. We have delved to such depths and have climbed to such heights amid the forces of nature that things have been brought to pass that almost awake in us a primeval faith in magic. And still there are possibilities unread, unwritten, and unknown!

F—WHEN I BEHOLD A BABE IN THE CRADLE.

Hours of rare rapture and solemn thought have been mine in seeing a babe in the crib and in thinking of its possibilities—in wondering at the wonder of that little bundle of flesh taking on in a few years the proportions of the orator and reformer. What possibilities downward in that wee mite! What possibilities outward and upward in that swaddled

body! What a mighty sword that little arm may wield! What a trenchant pen those wee fingers may push! What mighty burdens those slender little shoulders may one day bear! What mighty heights those little feet may one day climb! What marvelous oratory that little mouth may utter! What mighty armies may follow the beckoning of those hands—one day! What mighty parades of thought may one day pass through that little brain! What holy love or heinous hate may surge in that little heart—one day!

BUT, far above all and far beyond all that I have mentioned, is the rare rapture which comes to my heart when I behold a great gathering of young people such as are gathered before me at this hour. What marvelous possibilities in us and through us and by us and with us and for us under the mastery of Christ the Master.

What great possibilities—if a full surrender to Christ is made! What wonderful certainties—if a deep consecration to him is the desire of our hearts! What heights are attainable—if we give him the continents of our personalities rather than the corners! What mighty works will show themselves forth in us if we do his will. And these glorious possibilities are found in Christ alone. Art says "It is not in me!" Music says "It is not in me!" Philosophy says "It is not in me!" Education says "It is not in me!" Science says "It is not in me!" Culture says "It is not in me!" But this possibility

beyond all measuring is in Christ. What wonderful possibilities under his mastery!

May I call your attention to these facts?

I—CHRIST LOVED.

And only as we are in complete surrender to this greatest of all lovers will our lives show forth and breathe forth the love that is ever rich and abiding, ever with the passion of rescue and never with the least suggestion of rebellion.

What depths beyond all fathoming in his love! What heights beyond all climbing in his love! What expanse beyond all measuring in his love! What beauty beyond all describing in his love! What whiteness beyond all taint in his love! What rightness beyond all flaw in his love! What courage above all fear in his love! What sweetness beyond all bitterness in his love! What urge beyond all faint-heartedness in his love!

Every step he made from the sands of Egypt to the carpenter shop in Nazareth, to the Jordan river, through the hills of Judea, on the Lake of Galilee, in the road to Bethlehem, to the house of trouble, to the bed of sickness, to the grave of the dead, to the temple in Jerusalem, through the shadows of Gethsemane, through the agonies of Pilate's court, along the streets of the city that "stoned the prophets and killed them that were sent unto her," up the dark slopes of Calvary, out from the grave in Joseph's garden, along the road to Emmaus, on out

to Olivet where, "with the wind as his steeds and the cloud as his chariot" he went back to the Father —every step was a step of love.

The Bible asserts that the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of the love of God passeth knowledge.

The love of God in Christ Jesus has height. His love is far separated from any earthly substance. Having high birth in holiness God's love has power enough to waken the sleeping and to quicken the dead. And the holy power of that love is determined by the holy heights in which it is born.

God's love in Christ Jesus has depth. It reaches far downward and lifts up. Human love is tainted and lacks power to reach to the depths and exalt to the heights, but Christ's love moves among festering alleys and sewage and catches no defilement. If you would be mighty in loving humanity you will find this might in complete obedience to the urge of Christ's love.

God's love in Christ Jesus has breadth. It is as broad as the race. It knows, as one saith, no social limits; it imposes no national limits; it fortifies no ecclesiastical limits; it recognizes no creedal limits. Under the sway of this dynamic love finite powers perform infinite deeds, and human faculties work divine achievements.

In words not altogether mine I say, God's love in Christ Jesus has length. It has no end. There is no length to which it will not go. "Greater love

hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend!" That is the length. "He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross!" To that far length it goes. "He goeth after that which was lost until he find it!" To what greater length than that could his love go? The love of Christ goes to the last foot of the longest road, to the last hour of the longest day, to the last minute of the longest night, to the last breath of the longest life, to the far reaches of eternity. And if we would love to the fulness of our possibilities we will find this fulness in Christ Jesus.

Moreover, we must learn now that "justice is but love holding the balance; mercy is but love being gracious; eloquence is but love talking; prophecy is but love foretelling; faith is but love believing; charity is but love acting; sacrifice is but love offering itself; patience is but love waiting; fortitude is but love suffering; endurance is but love abiding; hope is but love abiding; peace is but love resting; prayer is but love communing; sympathy is but love tenderly touching; comfort is but love soothing; soul-saving is but love rescuing; enthusiasm is but love burning; work is but love laboring; sanctification is but love perfecting." And only as we are constrained by the love of Christ will we love to the heights and depths and lengths and breadth of our possibilities. But what an instrument is under a master musician's hand, what the paint tubes are

when utilized by a master artist, what a block of marble is under the hand and chisel of a master sculptor—these faintly portray what our possibilities are in love and the things of love under the dynamic domination and mighty mastery of Jesus.

II—CHRIST POSSESSED ALL THE SUBLIMITIES AND SIMPLICITIES OF SPIRITUAL LIFE.

All the sublimities and all the simplicities of spirituality were completely blended in him. What sublimities in his life! How sublime was he when as a babe heaven hung out its brightest star to mark his birthplace! How sublime was he when he startled the wise men in the temple, being then only twelve years old! How sublime when he spoke "as one having authority and not as the Scribes and Pharisees!" How sublime he when he spoke so marvelously that officers sent to arrest him returned without him, giving as their excuse for not bringing him "Never man spake like this man"! How sublime he when he arose from sleep in a tempest-tossed boat and rebuked the winds into peace and the waves into rest! How sublime he when he walked on the waves as though they were floors of opal and amethyst and emerald! How sublime he when leprosy fled from his presence and twisted limbs were made straight at his touch! How sublime he when he stopped a funeral procession and broke it! How sublime he when with trumpet voice he called Lazarus from the grave! How sub-

lime he when he refused to come down from the Cross! How sublime he when he rose from the dead, "the first fruits of them that slept"! How sublime he when he entered the upper room, "the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews," and said "Peace"!

Yet, withal, what simplicities in his life! His natural simplicity is an unstressed element in his life. There was no put-on and put-off with him. Compared with the attempt at simplicity—the tawdry and artificial attempt often seen—the natural and sweet simplicity of Jesus is as far beyond it as the soft splendors of the dawn are beyond the harsh and glaring stage effects. Compared to the assumed simplicity—the put-on simplicity of some, which smacks of hypocrisy—the charming simplicity of Jesus is above it as the sweet-perfumed loveliness of gardens and woods is above wax flowers! Jesus Christ is the very embodiment of naturalness and sublime simplicities. He mingled with all classes of men naturally and easily as man with man. Think how he called his disciples to him. He donned no priestly robes; he lifted no haughty head in high authoritative mandate; he manifested no supercilious air. He, simply said: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." To the little publican in the tree top he said simply "Come down, for today I must abide in thine house!" To Matthew he merely said "Follow me." That was all, but that was enough. Simply, as a tired traveler,

he asked the woman at the well for a drink. Perfectly poised he put at ease the woman who bathed his feet while others murmured against her. And "He was known in the breaking of bread!" Sublime as mountain grandeur, yet all the modesty of violets bloomed in him. Sublime as a mighty river at full tide, yet the joyful simplicities of childhood held abode in him. Sublime as the lightning when it burns its zig-zag paths across the sky, yet the beautiful glowing of lamps aglow at evening time lit his face and personality. Sublime as waves that beat down sea walls, yet as softly tender as ripples that whisper on the beach!

And this sublimity and simplicity in spiritual life you will need to possess as you go forth to do his work and will. There are times, young men and women, when you will have to be as strongly sublime as the eagle which soars beyond the reach of any archer; there are times when you will have to show forth the simplicity of the sparrow that twitters under the eaves or plays with its mates in the dust of the village street. There are times when men with minds antagonistic to the truth will hear your message; then you must rise to heights sublime and hesitate not to declare the whole counsel of God. There are times when little children will timidly draw nigh to speak the wisdom that cometh out of the mouths of babes and sucklings and to hear your words: then you must meet them on the threshold and go with them where unanointed feet cannot

walk. There are times when you must have the stride that walks ahead of giants; there are times when you must walk with those on crutches or with those but a little way from the cradle. The sublimities and simplicities of Christian living must be yours.

I am thinking now of what is told of Phillips Brooks, the great Boston preacher. He was visiting, we are told, in a home just before he was scheduled to deliver a great lecture. After luncheon, he barely had time to be prompt at the lecture place and hour. As he was hurriedly preparing to go a little child in the home drew nigh and said: "Mr. Brooks you must see my little kittens before you go!" He hesitated not, but said with sweet simplicity, "Well, my dear, if I must, I must!" And then following her little pattering feet he went down the dusty stairway into the dingy cellar and talked to her about the kittens. An hour later men swayed and shouted and sobbed under the spell of his mighty speech. Sublimity and simplicity!

I am thinking, too, of what Mr. Boreham, and Mrs. Bolton have written of Michael Faraday. Mrs. Bolton says that Faraday when just a boy went to hear Sir Humphry Davy lecture; the boy went out burning and consumed with the desire to be a great scientist; he wrote to Sir Joseph Banks, then president of the Royal Society, asking him for a place to work. No answer was returned to his request for a situation.

Could the president have known that some day ten thousand would know the name of Michael Faraday where one knew the name of Sir Joseph Banks, probably he would have answered that boy's letter.

Mr. Boreham tells us how a crowded gathering of distinguished scientists had been listening spellbound to the masterly expositions of Michael Faraday. For an hour he had held his brilliant audience enthralled as he demonstrated the nature and properties of the magnet. And he had brought his lecture to a close with an experiment so novel, so bewildering and so triumphant that, for some time after he resumed his seat, the house rocked with enthusiastic applause. And then the Prince of Wales —afterward King Edward the Seventh—rose to propose a motion of congratulation. The resolution, having been duly seconded, was carried with renewed thunders of applause. But the uproar was succeeded by a strange silence. The assembly waited for Faraday's reply. But the lecturer had vanished. What had become of him? The hour at which Faraday had concluded his lecture was the hour for the mid-week prayer meeting. That meeting he never neglected. And under cover of the cheering and applause he had slipped out of the crowded hall and hurried off to the little meeting house where a few had met to renew their fellowship with God. All the sublimities and all the simplicities met in Faraday's soul. The master of all

sciences, he kept in his breast the heart of a little child.

At another time men saw Faraday pass from a meeting of the Royal Society to sit at the feet of a certain local preacher who was notorious for his illiteracy; and the spectacle filled men with bewilderment and wonder.

As he lay dying they tried to interview the professor, the scientist, the genius, but it was the little child in him that answered them.

"What are your speculations?" they asked. "Speculations?" he asked. "Speculations! I have none. I am resting on certainties. I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." And reveling like a child in those cloudless simplicities, his great soul passed away. Under Christ the sublimities and the simplicities of spiritual dynamics will show forth themselves in men and women. In him all the simplicities and all the sublimities of heaven and earth are perfectly blended. What possibilities are ours if to him we humbly bow!

III—CHRIST SERVED PASSIONATELY AND COMPASSIONATELY.

Only as we let him rule us and use us will we come up to the fulness of our possibilities in passionate and compassionate service. But what wondrous possibilities in us will rise in majesty to meet

his own if we let him who went about doing good completely dominate us.

To bring this more forcibly to mind, I tell you this which we learn from the life of America's most amazing man: It was night on the battlefield of Kenesaw Mountain. A huge bulk of a twenty-year-old boy captain lay on the ground. A stretcher bearer, seeking for the wounded, bent down to try to hear heartbeats. "He's gone!" said the stretcher bearer, "his chest is blown open!" They went away and left that pile of bleeding flesh in the darkness. You would not have thought that the world could expect any more from that heap of bloody misery. There it lay through the night—no bedding but the ground, no pitying eyes but the stars, no voice but the night bird's shrill call and the fox's yelp, no hand but the fingers of the dew, no companions but the dead.

Up in a little town in Massachusetts a father and mother had been praying for this boy through all the months of fighting. That boy had run away from home twice. At Yale University he had worked in kitchens and wherever else he could find odd jobs to pay his tuition. He had become very "wise" as youth sometimes becomes. The university had knocked all his religion into a cocked hat; he was known and registered as an atheist. And this looked like the end, the bloody, wretched, lonely, loveless end—this bleeding body on the battlefield.

But there was life in that body. It was motion-

less with weakness. But in the brain a mighty parade of thought was passing. All that his father and mother had taught him of religion and God came back to him. He was converted there that night waiting for someone to come and pick him up. The next morning when someone came and found him alive they took him to the hospital. This boy called the chaplain and told him that from then on, he was going to be a Christian. That hour he took the devil's bit from his wild mouth and put on his neck the yoke of Jesus and he walked the Jesus way, following the path of his unselfish and wounded feet.

What was the possibility of that bleeding battle-bruised boy on that battle field that night? The stretcher bearer thought none. The seekers for the wounded thought none. And so it seemed! But that night the Christ of God laid his hands upon that wounded and bleeding boy even as he laid them on the little woman bent double for eighteen years whom he found in the synagogue one Sabbath day. That night Jesus walked across that war-scarred, cannon-cut battle field and entered the heart feebly beating in that chest blown open and shrapnel-shredded. That night Jesus drove away the vultures of doubt from that boy's heart as Rizpah had driven the jackals of the field and the carrion crows of the air from the bodies of her dead sons.

What came of that bleeding boy on that battle field that night? For one thing, the great Temple

University of Philadelphia through which have passed 125,000 students. For another thing, three great hospitals. For another thing the education of hundreds of young men and young women, to which object Dr. Russell Conwell has donated more than $8,000,000 earned in lecturing. For another thing a great Baptist preacher and a great Baptist church. For another thing 20 books superbly written and widely read and far-reachingly influential. For another thing another book, telling us about the life of John Wanamaker, is in process of completion. For another thing thousands of sheaves for the Lord garnered from fields white unto the harvest. For another thing America's most amazing man who, though he has earned millions of dollars, never has more than $100 of his own at any time.

All this was possible in that pitiful heap of a wounded, bleeding Union soldier at Kenesaw Mountain, whose chest was blown open and whose mouth because of thirst was hot like an oven. And it was all possible through the domination of Christ in his life.

But I would have you notice two things just here, men and women!

FIRST. Not all win renown on earth who serve Christ. Not all will be famous as Russell Conwell was famous. Not all will be in large type. Many will be written of in small type or not written of at all, except in the Book of Life. The only chance you may have to serve God may be in small type or

as a comma or exclamation point. But that doesn't lessen the possibility of great service. Commas and periods and exclamation points do great service. Ask the printers. Not all will adorn the gallery of the famous. Not all will shine before the footlights of the noted. Not all will be carried to their graves, when their work is done, with pomp and ceremony. But we must remember what George Eliot said: "The growing good of the world is largely dependent upon unhistoric acts; and that things are not half so ill with us as they might be is half owing to the number who lived faithfully the hidden life and rest in unvisited graves!" And we must often call to mind the words of Mrs. Browning who said:

"The world may sound no trumpets, ring no bells,
The Book of Life the shining record tells;
A child's kiss set on thy sighing lips shall make thee glad;
A sick one nursed by thee shall give thee strength;
A poor man helped by thee shall make thee rich;
An untaught one taught by thee shall make thee wise;
Thy love shall chant its own beatitudes after its own life workings;
Thou shalt be served thyself by every sense of service which thou renderest!"

Not our fields, but our faithfulness counts most; not our fame, but our fervor in things spiritual; not show, but sincerity!

SECOND. There are some things that mar and hurt in reaching the fulness of our possibilities in service. A thumb mark in a national gallery impoverishes a nation. An atom of steel in the presence of a compass needle causes the whole ship to go wrong. One cup of poison in a reservoir makes the whole reservoir to be doubted. One serpent in the garden makes the whole garden to be shunned. One cinder in the eye mars a great vision. One speck on the telescope's lens fills the sky with error. One broken thread weakens the whole fabric.

Learn from this to avoid the faults that mar rare gifts. Let no question mark establish itself after your profession. Let not the least suggestion of the false or the crafty or the scheming be connected with your name. I do not recall who told us so, but somebody spoke of what genius De Quincy had and of how marvelous the myriad-minded Coleridge, but the opium habit was vice that eclipsed their fame and robbed them of half their rightful influence. Voltaire's style was so faultlessly perfect that if the sentences lying across his page had been strings of pearl they could not have been more beautiful; but Voltaire's excesses make a black mark across the white page before each reader's mind. Rousseau's writings are so melodious that, long after laying aside the book, the ear would be filled with the sound of delicious music were it not that the reader seems to hear the moan of the four children whose unnatural father, without even giv-

ing them a name, placed in the foundling asylum. Carlyle's great genius and gymnastic use of words is marred and scarred because of the harshness that stained his rare talents and let his wife, for want of affection, freeze and die within his own home, like some poor traveler who had fallen in the snows beyond his door. George Eliot, marvelous and brilliant authoress, comes before us like a ghost of tragedy because we know that she drifted almost imperceptibly from the majestic and simple faith which she so tenderly portrays in "Janet's Repentance!" Edgar Allan Poe, plumed knight of poetry, brings sobs to us when we read his matchless "Annabel Lee" and know that he shattered his lance on the wine cup.

Robert Speer recently speared us when he said: "After thirty years of leadership in missionary work, it is my conclusion and conviction that the greatest missionary problem is just the failure of Christian people to live up to their professions!" And the more seriously I think on those words the more quickly I conclude that he is right.

But I do not need that statement to say that God cannot use people to lead the blind if they themselves are blind. Your influence, young people, to do God's work is as easily marred by sin as the white folds of a lily by spurts of ink. Your spiritual power is as easily made to wane by secret sin as the power of the hand diminishes when severed from the arm. Your power to win men and

women to Jesus is as easily made futile by the frivolity of the fleshly as a tree is made fruitless by draining the sap from its trunk and boughs. Your life is as certainly made barren by harboring animosities and envies and jealousies as fields are made barren by the withholding of sun and rain. You may think you have heaped mountains on some secret sin; and you may safely think these mountains will never tell what is buried in their bowels, but that sin will show forth itself in lack of spiritual power. You may think you have spread the sea over some cherished animosity and petted grudge; and not one of the ten thousand babbling waves will ever let the secret out, but that thing will show up in the short circuit it will put on your prayer life.

BUT—Oh!—what marvelous possibilities of service in each life if that life lets the Christ search it and try it and see if there be any wicked way in it and lead it in the way everlasting.

Down in Panama where once I worked, there was an old man, a sort of wandering minstrel, who played on a cheap, coarse, hoarse little old violin. Day in and day out, he dragged forth from that violin only rasping, raucous, razzy, jazzy, the raggedest of the ragged, music. A few leisurely ones sometimes dropped scant coins of small value in his dirty tin cup. Now one night Miss Viola Page violinist nonpareil, came through that city and played in concert at the Y. M. C. A. hall. That

night homesick men wept and laughed and shouted themselves hoarse as she played. What a tragedy in the music realm that she died at twenty-one! But here is what I started to tell!

The next morning she passed by the corner where this old man sat on the cheap box with his cheap violin. This lovely young woman, beautiful as a Grecian goddess, graceful as a flower of the woodland, stood a minute and looked at the old man. Then timidly and courteously she went forward and took the instrument from his hands. With her little lily-white hands she turned the dirty screws while the strings whined. She touched the strings lightly with the frazzled bow. Then she put it under her delicate little chin, and, for some moments, stood as though she were whispering some strange secret to it, as though she were hearing from its depths some sad tale of abuse and misuse. Then her little arm began to move that bow across those strings and then her little pink-tipped fingers ran races up and down the neck of that violin while the diamonds flashed like miniature suns on her fingers and while her body swayed gracefully like some garden flower bent by the breeze and while her eyes glowed dreamily in their sockets. Then—wonder of wonders! From here and there and everywhere the people came in flocks on eager feet! And they stood and listened, some weeping, while earthquakes rumbled and rivers roared and cataracts thundered and birds chirped and mothers sang their lullabies and lovers

whispered and children laughed and dewdrops tinkled and sweet, far-off bells chimed in the body of that little old violin, so long abused, so long misused. What made the difference? What brought gold in piles to the tin cup in the hairy hands of the old man? The violin, his violin, was in the hands of a master. That was all; that was enough. Think on this, young men and women, and on the raspy, raucous, razzy, jazzy music your life may have made till this hour, and then let the great Christ, the master of masters, have control. Oh! Let the fire in your heart melt the lead in your feet as you hasten to Him.

IV—CHRIST SUFFERED.

And only as we are in complete consecration to him will we have the heroism to desire and to endure the "fellowship of his suffering." Jesus suffered greatly, agonizingly, terribly. There was none of the coward in him. And if the cowardly blood flows in your veins you cannot follow him. By the way he dared the money-mad hucksters in the temple, I say unto you that Jesus was sublimely heroic. By the way he unflinchingly met the soldiers in the garden, I tell you he was heroic. By the way he met the kiss of the traitor that burned his cheek like coals of fire, I declare that he was heroic. By the way he confronted Pilate with undaunted brow, I assert that every drop of his blood was heroic. By the way he turned on the Pharisees, like a

wounded stag hounded over hill and vale, and spoke unto them when his every word was a thunderbolt, his every sentence a flare of lightning, his every paragraph an earthquake that shook them to the hypocritical marrow in their bones, I say he was sublimely heroic. This heroic Christ is the one that calls you to partake of his heroism.

Christ suffered. By the dirty sputum which they spat like garbage upon those cheeks that never blushed for shame, I say he suffered heroically. By the rough hands that slapped his face, white like a hawthorn blossom, I declare he suffered. By the merciless steel fangs of Pilate's scourge which bit to the bone in his bare back, I say he suffered. By the crown of thorns which tore his brow like jackals tear the face of captive lion, I declare he suffered. By the cobblestones on which he fell when the burden of the cross of wood was too heavy, I say he suffered. By the blotches of blood on his clothes and by the bloodstained ground of Gethsemane, I declare that he suffered. By his death couch of four spikes, two for the hands and two for the feet, I say he suffered. By the savage Roman spear which drank greedily from his side, I say he suffered. By the parched lips and mouth, hot like an oven, lacking any drop of cooling water, when all the sparkling rills were his, I say he suffered. By Calvary's hill, where "under the darkest cloud that ever shadowed the earth and amid the loudest thunder that ever shook the mountains, all the hatreds of earth

and all the furies of hell, charged with their bayonets and stopped not till there was no power left in hammer or bramble or javelin to hurt the dead Son of God," I declare that he suffered.

You agree to that. Do you agree that one great need of the world today is the need on our part to desire with all our mind and heart the fellowship of his suffering? Do you desire to share this fellowship of his suffering? Do you agree that we can never heal the wounded heart of the world with balm without money until we are "crucified with Christ whereby we are crucified to the world and the lusts thereof"?

"In this age of ease and worldliness, we are in danger of building up a generation of cowardly, half-hearted Christians, people satisfied with church going—once on Sunday morning—if it does not rain. We are in danger of prayer-meeting-less churches, of churches afraid of obligations, of churches that limp in a corner when we ought to go forth like an army with banners to the conquest of continents." So spoke a preacher recently. But we are in no danger of all that nor any of that if we can get enough men and enough women to stop not when the blood-letting starts.

Some know how to keep on when the blood-letting starts. Some know how to shine on when the darkness gathers. Some know how to remain true when some turn over to the slavery of the comfortable. Witness John and Mary Gaston!

Missionaries they—to China! They had some evidences of the fruit of their work. But one day Mary took sick, and John said, "Mary, you will have to go down the river." It was days before they could get a physician. He put her under a canopy in the boat, for it was a hot July day. She would look up at him and say, "John, I am so glad we came to China. We have so many that know Jesus today. It has been so good to be here!"

So on down the river they went. One day in the middle of the day, while the sun blazed mercilessly from above, they went up by a tree alongside the river, and she said, "I would like to go under that tree!"

So he carried her up under that tree, her head on his arm, and he looked down at that sweet face and she looked up at him and said, "John, I am not going any farther; I am going to be with Jesus. But I am so glad we came here." Then she named over so many that knew Jesus because they came. She spoke of the transformation in certain villages. Then John looked down toward the river. There were no Chinamen there. They knew that death was near. They had gone over the hill, and he was alone.

Mary kissed him good-by. And there were no flags at half mast; and nobody knew. He went to the boat and took out an oar, and went back. He dug the grave of his wife; took some boughs from the tree and spread them over to make it look like a

coffin; he took her white skirt to make it look like a shroud. Then he took that fellow soldier of his and put her body down in the grave and said some words over it and put some more boughs over it. After some hours of agony, he put on the dirt, his heart breaking with every clod and crumb of dirt which he threw in. He covered up her sweet face last, and left her there till the resurrection morn.

Then he went up the hill and called the Chinamen to him, and down to the boat they went and started down the river. But John said "UP the river—UP to fight for God," for the last words that brave little woman had said were: "John, I wish you would go and live for God until the end!"

Men and women can't live like that and love like that and suffer like that and die as that little woman died unless the love of Christ Jesus is in the heart. And he that so lives is not dead when he dieth. "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Is Moody dead? The great institution of his says not. Is Judson dead? The hundreds of Baptist churches and thousands of Christians in Burma say he is not. Is Carey dead? China's turning from the tomb of her ancestors to the Cross of Christ says that he being dead yet speaketh. Is Livingstone dead? Ethiopia, stumbling with outstretched hands toward God over that highway marked by the tombstone of martyr missionaries, declares that he abideth forever. Is Grace McBride dead? The church bells ringing across the frozen snows where she lived

and died say that she can never die. Is Richard Furman dead? Furman University with its hundreds of young men who go forth from her halls to honor the Christ says that Richard Furman walks her campus and sits in her class rooms and speaks in her halls today.

So will you abide, young people, if you follow the Christ. Cut the chains that hold you in ignoble anchorage. Launch out! Christ will keep you from the intellectual conceit which is unaware of the rattle of dry bones. He will keep you from the smiling ease with which old faiths are chucklingly thrown off and new ones grimacingly taken on. He will keep you from the superficial mental illumination that lacks the urge of sacrificial passion. He will keep you from the fad to be glibly modern rather than the desire to be eternally right.

Oh! That God's fire would decide us now! Let us pray that his Spirit "will descend into our hearts to burn up the bullock that we may be a whole burnt offering unto God." As the fire fell from heaven on Elijah's altar on Mt. Carmel, may his Spirit descend into this auditorium and burn up the wood and stones of our sin and the very dust of worldliness and the chilly cold waters of indifference which seek to put out the fire on the altar.

May we all go out of this place, saying, not with lips that perjure the emotions of the heart nor with hearts that are false to the vows of the lips, but

with a fire in our hearts that will melt the lead in our feet, our lips singing as we go:

> " 'Tis done, the great transaction's done,
> I am my Lord's and He is mine;
> He drew me, and I followed on,
> Glad to obey the voice divine!"

VI

WHAT HE WAS MADE

"He was made"—Jno. 1:14; Rom. 8:3; Isa. 7:14; Gal. 4:4-5; Heb. 7:22; II Cor. 5:21.

We make bold to say that none of the days gone forever into the tomb of Time had or held more glorious opportunities and more stupendous responsibilities than do these days in which you and I are privileged to live. In these very recent years the titanic potencies accumulating through the centuries came to a sudden head. And when they did so, they toppled over old thrones, swept away ancient dynasties, burst through venerable creeds, snapped the rusty chains of tradition, smashed impregnable institutions, uprooted century-entrenched falsehoods—leaving us to face and to deal with a head-dizzy, body-weary, heart-sick, soul-famished world. And we acknowledge that today we are face to face with great giants of iniquity, with many subtle antagonisms, with many treacherous flatteries that come but to steal and to kill and to destroy. While the forces of righteousness are alive today—and powerful—so also are the forces of evil.

We are not "pale slaves of depression and pessi-

mism" when we say that mightily existent today are all the forces of decay and all the powers of treacherous evil which, in the centuries gone by, wrought havoc!

Today, alive and active in our land, are all the haughty evils that made Babylon a "vermin-infested, briar-possessed, spider-hung, animal-prowling jungle where the hanging gardens once bloomed."

All the besmirching iniquities that made Nineveh a dirty doormat for irreverent feet thrive in our world today.

All the sin diseases that made glorious Tyre a meatless skeleton ghastly with grins exist today.

All the corrosive ills that made Assyria a rusty hinge on a doorless door fatten in our land today.

All the sins and sinning that made mighty Rome a branchless tree dishonorably fruitless are defiantly rampant now.

All the evils that made Greece—cultured, poetic, musical, philosophic, artistic, athletic, æsthetic Greece—a crumb in history's rubbish heap are at work in America today, silently as moths in chests of fine clothes, secretly and destructively as mice in a writer's desk, boldly as drunken men speaking in the wild nightmares of disordered brains.

All the blatant unrighteousness that made Egypt a shabby sexton of splendid tombs, today, in this land where the Pilgrim fathers prayed and Jonathan Edwards preached, "loose wild tongues that hold not God in awe."

All the greedy selfishness and craze for gold that made Spain a drowsy beggar watching a broken clock ply their trade with the effrontery of a thief who comes but to steal and to kill and to destroy—iniquities reeking with Pharisaic self-applause, iniquities that would "lead our greatest graces to the grave and leave the world no copy," as the debates superciliously conducted in scientific, psychologic, and philosophic kindergartens testify. Yes, the ageless problems of human sin and mischoice, black, menacing, terrible, big with possibilities of world destruction, are with us. Moreover, all the perversions of true religion and all the devices of all false religions assail us today.

But what rejoicing is ours that we have today God's Book—the Bible—the strangest, the mightiest, the weirdest, the loveliest, the best of all books, to guide us in our glooms, to prompt us in our perplexities, to help us in our hazards, to direct us in our doubts, to be a "lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path." Wondrous Book! Book above and beyond all books as a river is beyond a rill in reach, as the sun is above and beyond the tallow dip in brightness, as Niagara is above and beyond the mill pond in power, as the oak is above and beyond the roadside weed in majesty, as the wings of an eagle are beyond the wings of a sparrow in strength, as a tree is beyond a twig in fruit-bearing. Book that has withstood storms of fire! Book against which tyranny has issued its edicts! Book

against which Mohammedanism has hurled its anathemas! Book against which infidelity has thrown its sharpest shafts and strongest spears of scorn and ridicule! Book which the dissecting knives of modernistic "intellectuals" have whacked at, like butchers, and do whack at now like savages on a midnight raid! Book against which snipers from behind some pulpit stands and some college chairs have aimed their ill-grounded propositions.

But withal, all its enemies have not torn one hole in its holy vesture nor stolen one flower from its wondrous garden nor diluted one drop of honey from its abundant hive nor broken one string on its thousand-stringed harp nor drowned one sweet word in infidel ink nor made dim one ray of its perpetual light nor stayed its triumphant progress by so much as one step nor shortened its life by so much as one brief hour! It is still the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword! And more besides!

Now Jesus, our preventative and curative Christ, is the grand subject of the Bible. Christ Jesus who was ever "tender without being weak, strong without being coarse, lowly without being servile, mighty in his conviction but never intolerant, enthusiastic but never fanatical, ever holy but never Pharisaic, passionate for the truth but never tainted with prejudice—never making a false step, never striking a jarring note, never speaking a false word." And about this Jesus, in the Bible, three simple and

mightily significant words—"He Was Made"—are frequently written.

"He was made"—three words that sound forth like a sweet old organ whose "full breath is thunder" in the stately cathedral of John's gospel!

"He was made"—three words that gleam like radiantly rare jewels in the treasure house of Romans.

"He was made"—three words that burn their way into our attention, like forest fires at midnight, in the mountain ranges of Hebrews.

"He was made"—three words that sound forth in the book of Galatians like the music of all choirs, visible and invisible, poured forth in one anthem.

"He was made"—three words that bloom like the flowers of ten thousand springtimes in one bouquet in the fertile gardens of I and II Corinthians.

"He was made." "He was made"—what? WHAT?

I—"MADE FLESH"—"MADE OF A WOMAN"—"MADE UNDER THE LAW."

A—"MADE FLESH."

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (Jno. 1:1-2). "In the beginning"! Those words teach his eternity. "And the Word was with God"! Those words teach his equality. "And the Word was God"! Those words teach his deity. "The same

was in the beginning with God"! Those words teach his pre-existence.

"And the Word was made FLESH, and dwelt among us" (Jno. 1:14). "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the *likeness* of sinful *flesh* and as an offering for sin condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). "Made of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:13).

Here we behold the pre-existent Christ. But this pre-existent Christ Jesus was not flesh back yonder when the morning stars serenaded the advent of our infant earth as it lay, "wrapped in swaddling clothes of light," in the arms of the great Jehovah, for "all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that is made" (Jno. 1:3).

He was not flesh back in creation days when there was the gathering together of the waters called the seas for "the world was made by him" (Jno. 1:10).

He was not flesh when the first ray of light shone, when the first bird sang, when the first lion "panted in the jungles of roses," when the first flower bloomed, when the first fire burned, when the first river flowed, when the first rose opened wide its rubied heart, when the first wind blew, when the first lily bared its white bosom. "For by him were all things created that are in Heaven and that are in the earth . . . and he is before all things and by him all things consist" (Col. 1:15-17).

But! But "He was made flesh"—and every

nerve was divine handwriting, every bone was divinely sculptored, every muscle was a pulley divinely swung! Jesus, "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man"—yet "made flesh," "made of a woman." As Milton puts it:

"That glorious form, that light insufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
Wherewith he wont at heaven's high council table
To sit the midst of Tribal Unity,
He laid aside; and here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of clay!"

And only as we get some conception of the mystery and marvel and miracle of the truth that he "was made flesh" do we have some proper and adequate conception of his sufferings in the *physical realm* on the Cross. It was upon flesh, flesh as tender as a little woman's flesh, that the merciless steel fingers of Pilate's scourge fell. It was into flesh, flesh sensitive to pain, that the thorns that composed his crown of thorns bored. It was through flesh, tender flesh, that the nails of his death couch were driven. It was from flesh that the crimson tides of blood flowed. It was upon flesh that the hard palms of the slappers and mockers fell with strength and cruelty. It was in the flesh that he conquered the sins of the flesh, healed the diseases of the flesh, drove away the fever fires that burn up human bod-

ies, conquered the loathsome leprosy that lays waste the flesh of the body, and straightened out the crippled bones of lame bodies. "It behooved him to be made like his brethren" (Heb. 2:17). For the Book says:

B—"MADE OF A WOMAN."

A virgin irreproachable! A virgin having "found high favor with God"! A virgin "blessed among women," with child (Luke 1:28). A virgin!—and the "holy thing born of her was the Son of God!" (Luke 1:35). Event that has occurred once, *only* once, one marvelous once, in the history of the world.

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign, Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name JESUS . . . Then said Mary unto the angel, how shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God"! (Luke 1:30, 31, 34, 35).

Then this: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, *made of a woman*,

made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:4-5).

And of all the women who have been honored with motherhood, during all the centuries when women have gone down to the gates of death to bring human lives into being, Mary has had the highest honor placed upon her. For he who lived long before Mary was born chose to be "made of her," to be born of her, a woman; he who was loved of God before the foundation of the world (John 17:24) accepted God's choice of Mary as the channel through which he, the pre-existent One, should become flesh and dwell among men; he who is the "first-born of every creature" (Col. 1:15) became the first-born of Mary, Mary the virgin who had not known man.

His supernatural birth is the Alpha of our Christian faith. Let that be accepted and the whole alphabet follows as a matter of course. Deny it and, like a planet that leaves its orbit, there is no telling where unbelief will carry you. The virgin birth is the seal of the Father's approval affixed to the claims of Jesus as his only begotten Son!

His birth into our world by a virgin was a translation at the same time it was an incarnation. It was a transfer of his person from a previous condition of existence to this earthly one. It was his being clothed upon with our human nature. He saith, "A body hast thou prepared me" (Heb. 10:5). Be-

fore incarnation Jesus was God's instrument in creation. During incarnation Jesus was God's instrument in redemption. Then it is not just poetry and rhetoric and fiction when we say: "When the Lord of power determined to forsake his royal chariot and to alight on this earth, he undressed himself first. He gave to the clouds his bow! He gave to the sky his azure mantle! He gave to the stars his jewels! He gave to the sun his brightness, AND, receiving instead of these the strange homespun clothes of one who had not where to lay his head," he was "made flesh," "made of a woman"! His incarnation meant, and means, that the pre-existent Christ was embodied in human flesh, demonstrated in human life, exemplified in human action, crystalized in human form.

But he was not originally a human being, but the Divine One! He was not the offspring of woman as is man. He was the Mighty God, the Inhabitor of Eternity, the Creator made of the creature woman. He was Son of Man. He was Son of God! And both in one! And just as much Son of Man as though he were not Son of God and just as much Son of God as though he were not Son of Man!

He was so human he got tired; he was so divine he said "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." He was so human he got hungry; he was so divine he took

five loaves and two fishes and fed thousands. He was so human he got thirsty; he was so divine he walked on the storm-tossed sea—so divine he said to the woman at the well; "Whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto life eternal." He was so human he felt the need to pray; he was so divine that in all of his praying there is no confession of sin. He was so human he had to sleep; he was so divine he arose from sleep and stilled the raging tempest. He was so human he accepted a village girl's invitation to her wedding; he was so divine that at this wedding he changed water into wine. He was so human he got lonely and was pained at the slowness of human recognition; he was so divine he could say, "The Father hath not left me alone." He was so human he was "tempted in all points like as we are"; he was so divine he he asked, "Who convinceth me of sin?" He was so human he yearned for human sympathy; he was so divine he "trod the wine press alone." He was so human he wept; he was so divine he stood at the grave where he wept and raised the dead brother and gave him back to the empty arms and aching hearts of the sisters. He was so human he grew in wisdom and stature; he was so divine he "upholdeth all things by the word of his power."

But yet again it was stated that he was

C—"MADE UNDER THE LAW."

"To redeem them that are under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:4-5). This the high and holy purpose!

"He was made under the law." He was made under the law which was made for sinners and not for the righteous. He was made under the law which could not claim him for himself but claimed him for us, for when he was made of a woman he was made under the law and his incarnation brought him under our condemnation—him who had no cause in him for condemnation. The cause of condemnation was in us who had sinned and "come short of the glory of God"—in us who had "turned every one to his own way"—in us who had lifted high hands of rebellion against God—in us, who, like sheep, had gone astray—in us who despised the goodness of God—in us who preferred darkness to light because our deeds were evil. So, for us who deserved death, Christ was made under the law and died under the law, but his death was the "end of law for righteousness." Made under the law, he bore the penalty of the law, grievous as it was. As someone says, "He arranged his own death sentence when he made the law and then bore his own fixed penalty in his own body on the tree."

But joy superlative it is to know that the Lord has fully dealt, for us, with the Law's claim that man shall deserve acceptance. Legal satisfaction

is forever taken out of our hands by Christ. Jesus himself dealt, in the sinner's interest, with the law, honoring its holy claims to the uttermost under the human conditions which he freely undertook, so that, by faith, the community between Jesus and sinners is real, the community of their debt on one side and Christ's merit on the other side!

He became one of us that he might become our King as well as our Saviour. He clothed himself in our dust that we might wear his royal robe. He lay in our grave that we might sit on his throne. He "emptied himself of the glory he had with the Father before the world was" that we might be "filled with all the fulness of God." Again, he was

II—"MADE A CURSE."

God says so. And that truth presses itself down upon our hearts with the weight of a thousand worlds —when we consider it aright. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law. Being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree!" (Gal. 3:13).

We pitch our mental tents on this verse, we gather our hearts' meditations about this statement, as those who approach a holy-white sanctuary where unanointed feet cannot walk! "MADE A CURSE FOR US"! Jesus, so finely strung, so unutterably keyed to truth, mercy, justice, love, quickly feeling the sorrow, sympathy, and indignation which injus-

tice and wrong invariably elicit for all high souls —"made a curse"!

Jesus, Inhabitor of Eternity—"made a curse"! Jesus, Teacher come from God—"made a curse"! Jesus, "image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature"—"made a curse"! Jesus, "Light of Light," hanging in darkness when "the sun went down at noonday and the earth was darkened in the clear day"—"made a curse"! Jesus, "Poet's Poet, Wisdom's Tongue, Man's Best Man, good Paragon, Crystal Christ"—"made a curse"! Jesus, Miracle greater than all his miracles,—"made a curse"! Jesus, "the brightness of God's glory and the express image of his person"—"made a curse"! Jesus, "who had the glory with the Father before the world was," "giving his back to the smiters and his cheeks to them that plucked off his beard, and hiding not his face from shame and spitting"—"made a curse"! Jesus, "the Father's comprehensibility and visibility"—"made a curse"! Jesus, "heir of all things," "fairer than all the fair who fill the heavenly train"—"made a curse"! He who was earth's greatest blessing was "made a curse"!

Never a curse *TO* anybody. "Made a curse" FOR *every*body.

He was the blessed Son of God bringing blessing wherever he went. Into the midst of earth's night he came to give light! Into the midst of earth's sorrow he came to give joy! Into the midst of earth's strife he came to give peace! Into the midst

of earth's death he came to give life! He never met a blind man that he didn't give him sight! He never met a deaf man that he didn't make him hear! He never met a dumb man that he didn't loose his tongue! He never met a crippled man that he didn't make him walk! He never met a leper that he didn't make him whole! He never went into a sick room that he didn't heal the sick! He never met a funeral procession that he didn't break it up! He never went into the cemetery that he didn't raise the dead!

He was never a curse *TO* anybody! He was "made a curse" FOR everybody! The curse due us fell crushingly on him, for God laid on him the iniquity of us all. Deuteronomy records the penalty of the curse. It reads: "His body shall not remain on a tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day (for he that is hanged is accursed of God) that thy land be not defiled, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance" (Deut. 21:23).

"I took a day to search for God,
And found Him not. But as I trod
By rocky ledge through woods untamed,
Just where one scarlet lily flamed
I saw His footprint in the sod!

"Then suddenly, all unaware,
Far off in the deep shadows, where
A solitary hermit thrush
Sang through the holy twilight hush—
I heard His voice upon the air.

"And even as I marveled how
God gives us heaven and now,
In a stir of wind that hardly shook
The poplar leaves beside the brook—
His hand was light upon my brow.

"At last with evening as I turned
Homeward and thought what I had learned
And all that there was still to probe—
I caught the glory of His robe
Where the last fires of sunset burned."

Now we do not agree with the pantheistic tendencies or teachings of the verses just quoted. But we do agree in believing that wherever Jesus walked, whether in dusty highway, by Galilee's shores, up mountain slopes or on city pavements, his were the footprints of God. "God manifest in the flesh." When he spoke, whether in teaching as "one who had authority and not as the scribes" or in wooing love that drew sinners to him, or in rebuke, or in flaming and righteous wrath when his every sentence was a flash and flare of verbal lightning, his was the voice of God. When his hand touched the loathsome leper or blind eyes or deaf eardrums or crippled limbs or the brow hot with fever fires or the hand cold with the ice of death, the touch of his hand was the touch of God, for "God was in Christ" (2 Cor. 5:19). Wherever he went he was "the glory of the invisible God," the brightness of God's glory. This is he who was "made a curse." Truth that overawes us with its solemnity—"Christ was

made a curse for *us*"! The only sinless One was made a curse for the vile and sinful ones.

"My sins laid open to the rod,
The back which from the law was free;
And the eternal Son of God
Received the curse once due to me!

"The sponge of vinegar and gall
By me was placed upon his tongue;
And when derision mocked his call
I stood the mocking crowd among!"

Wonderful that the Son of God, "Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" was, for us, "made a curse!"

Not only so. But Jesus was

III—"MADE SIN."

"For him who knew no sin hath God made to be sin in our behalf that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21).

The fact of his sinlessness is beyond all challenge. John the Baptist had not hesitated to condemn with unpitying severity the religious leaders of those times and to demand of them repentance and baptism, but to Christ Jesus he said, "I have need to be baptized of thee—and comest thou to me?" Several times Pilate, with an emphasis and an earnestness no one could overlook, said "I find no fault in him!" Pilate's wife called him "This just man!" Judas, refusing to die with a lie on his lips, said, "I

have betrayed the innocent blood!" The centurion who saw him die when every breath he drew was a pang of pain and when every beat of his heart was a throb of agony, said, "Surely this man was the Son of God." The worst things his enemies could say about him was that "he made himself the Son of God" and "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them!"

When, on one occasion, the Jews sought to throw slurs on his birth, Jesus, with a question that flares like lightning, asked, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (Jno. 8:46). And yet again we read: "Ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin!" (I John 3:5).

Marvelous that he was "made of a woman." Marvelous that he was "made under the law to redeem them that are under the law!" Marvelous that God "sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin condemned sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit!" But more wonderful even than that, more triumphantly transcendent, is the truth that God "made him who knew no sin to be sin in our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in him." This verse is a fortune in a single diamond; the glories of many flowers in one flower; the eloquence of much eloquence in one utterance. By the truths it reveals, some luminous with noonday brightness, some dark with midnight blackness,

it is one of the stateliest cathedrals of human speech. By the mercy and mystery it testifies to, it stands among the real sublimities of Bible vocabulary. By the tragedy it acknowledges it is a pathos of language that defies all definition. By the victories it assures, it contains a splendor of revelation that leaves little to be said.

"MADE SIN! THE SINLESS ONE "MADE SIN"! "IN HIM NO SIN" yet "MADE SIN."

Holy of holies this into which unhallowed eyes cannot look, behind the veil of which none dare to intrude with cheap scorn. I know of nothing more vastly vast!

1—Terrible truth this in face of the terribleness of sin.

Sin, the darkest, saddest fact in God's universe. Tragedy back of every tragedy! SIN is folly, disorder, devastation, death. Sin, an opiate in the will, a frenzy in the imagination, a madness in the brain, a poison in the heart, is the intolerable burden of a soul that is destined to live forever, a black darkness that invests man's whole moral being—the sum of all terror, all horror, all cruelty. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12).

Greedy as worms, merciless as an octopus, relentless as a serpent, poisonous as a viper, SIN is no "disagreeable hindrance to the smooth on-going of the social machinery" no "upward stumble in man's

progress," as say some; no skin wound, but a fatal mischief of the heart; no light discord but a thunderbolt that crashes the organ into splinters and leaves it without shape or tone. A death's-head set amid life's feast—a desert breath that drinks up every dew!

And sin identifies itself with beauty. Not as a leper in sackcloth crying "Unclean" but with the glories of the rainbow it oft approaches. Not as a locust, but as a butterfly; not as a hornet, but as a humming bird it oft appears. Not with the vulture's filthy beak and blood-fouled feathers, but with the peacock's train it oft comes to us. Whoever said the foregoing spoke mighty truths.

Like Mokanna, the prophet of the silver veil, it seems like some angel

"Sent to free the world from every bond and stain
And bring its primal glories back again."

But when the silver veil is torn away and its hideous features are revealed, it may well say with the veiled prophet to Zelica:

"Here, judge if hell, with all its power to damn,
Can add one curse to the foul thing I am!"

2—Terrible this fact that he, the sinless One, was "made sin" in view of God's hatred of sin!

Behold this picture: It is night time. A little child, wearied with much play, falls asleep. The

father and mother, the light of love beaming in their eyes, the tone of love in their whispering voices, the inexhaustible wonder of parental sacrifice burning in their hearts, put their darling into the trundle bed. With deft and tender hands the mother smooths the pillow and spreads the coverlets, the father taking in every detail of the scene with admiring eyes. Child of phenomenal beauty that, its voice sweeter to their ears than chiming bells, its eyes bluer than violets dew-wet, its luxuriant curls golden like sunshine, its face on the pillow dainty like a pink rose in a snowbank, its soft sleep-breathings like faint whispers of a harp touched by angel fingers. What mighty hold those baby hands, wee and dimpled, have upon human hearts! They kneel, those parents, a minute beside the trundle bed, pure thoughts holding high and holy carnival in their minds. Then, before they go to seek for themselves rest and sleep, they pray that God will give them wisdom to rear that child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

And then, in the night, while they sleep, a rattlesnake with stupid audacity and vile intrusion, crawls in through an open window and into the bed of the child. The hideous reptile coils itself into a circular pile and lies there apparently in a stupor until, at the movement of a dimpled hand or a turn of the curly head, the rattler, his buttons buzzing with diabolical effrontery, strikes out madly. And the poisonous fangs are buried in the cheek

of the child. In awful agony it dies—while the parents sleep. The next morning they awake. They go to the bed and find their approach challenged by the rattler whose head sways ominously while his buttons sing with raucous warning. They see their child swollen, dead, its little face bearing the evidences of its frightful death agonies.

Now—if you will magnify the attitude and the hatred of that vile rattler by that father and that mother a million times a million times you will have a faint conception of how God Almighty looks toward sins and upon sin. You will know in some slight measure his perpetual attitude toward sin, his eternal hatred of sin. Yet it is said that our holy God "made Jesus who knew no sin to be sin in our behalf that we might be made the righteousness of God in him!"

3—"Made sin"—What does it mean? What do they mean, these two words, "made sin," that stagger under a weight of agony?

It means that God dealt with him as he must deal with sin—in severe and unrelenting judgment!

It means that God sentenced sin, ordered sin to execution in the person and death of His Son. Jesus has made up before God for all we failed to do and be. Jesus takes all our sin and sins upon himself and bestows all his righteousness upon us. Jesus took sin's place on the Cross! Took the guilty culprit's place there! Took *my* place there! It means that he, the perfectly righteous One, was made sin

that we, the unrighteous ones, might be made righteous. For God meted out to Jesus the full measure of punishment sin deserves.

It means—"He stood before God with all our sin upon him that we, through faith, might stand before God with none of our sin on us."

He who was righteous was judged before God as unrighteous that we who are unrighteous should be judged before God as righteous!

"He was made for us all that God must judge AND we are made in him by faith all that God cannot judge."

And this could not be through physical suffering alone! By the bloody drops of sweat in Gethsemane, by the dirty sputum, "contempt materialized in a liquid," by the rough hands that plucked off his beard, by the merciless steel fingers of Pilate's scourge, by the thorns that punctured his brow veins, by the nails that pinned him to the tree, by his mouth hot like an oven, I know, you know, all of us know, he suffered physically on the Cross.

But! To speak of Jesus' suffering as intense physical torture only is a species of spiritual stupidity and intellectual clownishness. Because of the depths and vastnesses of sin's malignant nature, which caused the feet of Deity to draw back with trembling, terms like bravery, courage, martyrdom, physical agony have no place because they contain no meaning big enough to fit his experience, when he "made his soul an offering for sin"—when he

died a spiritual death as well as a physical death. He founded our joy in the deep bitterness of his own soul.

The pangs of hell gat hold upon him! God turned him into the slime pits of hell! The thirst of hell was upon him! The lightest of his sufferings were physical! The tortures of the damned were upon him. "The soul of his suffering was the suffering of his soul." He bore the burdens of sin on his sinless soul. And he did this for all—*ALL!*

"That night when in the Judean skies
The mystic star dispensed its light,
A blind man moved in his sleep—
And dreamed that he had sight!

"That night when shepherds heard the song
Of hosts angelic choiring near,
A deaf man stirred in slumber's spell—
And dreamed that he could hear!

"That night when in the cattle stall
Slept child and mother cheek by jowl,
A cripple turned his twisted limbs—
And dreamed that he was whole!

"That night when o'er the newborn babe
The tender Mary rose to lean,
A loathsome leper smiled in sleep—
And dreamed that he was clean!

"That night when to the mother's breast
The little King was held secure,
A harlot slept a happy sleep—
And dreamed that she was pure!

"That night when in the manger lay
The sanctified who came to save,
A man moved in the sleep of death—
And dreamed there was no grave!"

And let it be counted folly, or frenzy, or fury, or whatsoever it is our wisdom and comfort to know that for those blind in sin, for those deaf in sin, for those crippled in sin, for those impure with the harlotry of sin, for those loathsome with the leprosy of sin, for those "dead in trespasses and sins," "Him who knew no sin did God make to be sin in their behalf that they might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

The death of Christ was for us. Therefore Christ was condemned to death instead of us. To condemn us now after we have put our faith in Christ and surrendered personally to him, would be to say that the death of Christ was not sufficient and that there was no justice with God, for he would get two payments for one debt, two payments for one offense. But, thank God, the death of Christ is sufficient and God is not possessed of the injustice that demands two payments for one debt—and we can truly say, "There is now therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit!" We can find no knowledge in the world better than this: That man hath sinned and God hath suffered; that God in Christ made himself the sin of men; that men are made the righteousness of God!

In view of this let us ask: Is any distance too great to go—for him—who went to the Cross for us? Is any burden too heavy to bear—for him—who bore the heavy weight of the world's sins on our heart? Is any sacrifice too severe to make—for him—who was "made a curse" for us? Is any obligation too heavy to assume—for him—who was "made sin" in our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in him? Is any service too great to render—for him—who was made for us all that God must judge and punish? Is it not time that we say: "I count all things but loss that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering"?

IV—"MADE ALIVE."

"He showed himself alive after his passion"—Acts. 1:3. "When they heard that he was alive"—Mark 16:11. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead" (Rom. 8:11).

Everybody thought he was dead. As the day went dark, as the sun went down at noonday upon the skull-shaped hill, they named him a dead king. To them his day was ended. His glory departed. "Whatever he was, he is dead!" they said. The smug scribes and elders whose cautious creeds and ritualistic shows, so utterly void of inward reality, he had condemned, said he was dead! The religious leaders whose religion was "faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null" said he was dead. The

soldiers who drove the nails into his hands said he was dead. AND "the little group who gazed through weeping eyes on that spectacle had a judgment different in quality but not in character. They saw a beloved form stiffen; eyes that had so often looked upon them with vast yearning, glaze; hands that had so often carried to the suffering multitudes the touch of healing become lifeless; the voice that had spoken as never man spake, grow dumb!" "And as they watched and wept, hope saw no star, for hope was dead, and listening love heard not even the rustle of an angel's wing!" "For as yet they knew not the Scriptures that he must rise from the dead!"

A tragedy for them! The throne of their beloved had disappeared in a tomb. His regal robes had changed to a dreary shroud. His only crown was a crown of thorns. His kingdom had shrunk to the narrow dimensions of a grave. His only throne was a cross of wood. His only inaugural cry "My God! My God!—why hast thou forsaken me?" His only scepter a weed. His only companions in inauguration two thieves. His only reign six hours physical and soul agony on the Cross. His only inaugural splendor the darkness that shrouded the earth. His only "king's cup" a sponge filled with vinegar and gall. These sorrowful ones, in upper rooms and dark retreats, thinking of him who, marred and scarred, was sleeping in Joseph's garden, whispered to each other, "We trusted that it

had been he who would have redeemed Israel!" But their expectations had been shattered by envious death. He who was "the Ancient of Days" was "cut off in the midst of his days."

But, he resumed his power; he recovered his challenged rights; he regained his waning influence; he re-asserted his sacred grandeur! And answering thus his malignant enemies, he sent echoing down the ages the blest assurance that there is something in the universe higher than its laws, namely, a Christ who, born in denial of the laws of life and made alive in defiance of the laws of death, saith: "Behold, I am he that was dead and am alive forever more!" *SO* he is no mere shadow Christ of legend, no mere dream Christ of culture and romance, no mere immanent Christ of nature, no mere ideal Christ of the painter's canvas and the sculptor's chisel, no mere hero Christ of song and story, but a living Christ, for the tomb in Joseph's garden is *empty*.

But we would not have to know of the empty tomb to know that Jesus is "made alive from the dead!" We know, you and I, people in whom Christ lives today, daily, hourly. We know some, maybe more than the world's arithmetic allows, concerning whom we can testify, as Paul spoke of himself; "They are crucified with Christ; nevertheless they live; yet not they, but Christ liveth in them; and the life which they now live in the flesh they

live by the faith of the Son of God who loved them and gave himself for them."

No dead king! No!! As Dan Poling puts it, though I may add to and take from his words: He was not a dead king who commanded the intrepid saints of the early church, who led them out to light a gospel lamp in the palace of the Cæsars and to set the banner of the Cross above the screaming eagles of Rome. No dead king he who lit the signal fires of the Pentecostal upper room, who held the gaze of Stephen, when, through the showering stones, the first Christian martyr lifted his dying eyes to the opening heavens and claimed forgiveness for his murderers! No dead king he who took command of Saul of Tarsus, blinded him with lightnings and then thrust him forth to compass the earth with the truths of redemption! No dead king he who made out of the heathen Coliseum a Christian church! No dead king he who tamed the fires for Savonarola, who enabled Luther to see a corrupt church broken and rebuked, who let Wyclif see the first rays of the morning star of Reformation ere he "put out to sea," who led the Ironsides of Cromwell, who eased the waves that washed the decks of the "Mayflower" and calmed the seas that broke about the prow of the "Half-Moon," who enabled Florence Nightingale to bandage the world's battle wounds, who gave to the first missionaries the islands of the sea for an inheritance! No dead king he who led the scholarly William Screven, driven out of

New England by persecution, to establish the first Baptist church in the South in Charleston in 1683. No dead king he who enabled William Carey to land in Calcutta on Nov. 11th, 1783 (the very day the French Revolutionists tore the Cross from Notre Dame, smashed it in the streets, and abjured Christianity), and claim a new continent for Christ.

No dead king who inspired the great John A. Broadus, once as penniless as the Seminary was poor, to turn deaf ears to a call to a great Northern church that paid $10,000, to fasten his flag to the mast of what seemed to many to be a sinking Seminary ship. No dead king who gave John Anderson—a Sir Galahad from Furman University—courage to choose a mud grave in a Chinese river rather than the comforts of a life of ease. Not dead! No! "Alive forevermore!" "Wesley, Carey, Paton, Morrison, Livingstone, Adoniram Judson, and that numberless company of their faith who went forth to make the waste places of idolatry blossom with the flowers of salvation, followed not the banner of a dead king, but marched in the train of a living Lord!"

And this Christ Jesus, who was "made flesh," "made of a woman," "made a curse," "made sin," and "made alive from the dead" is the same Christ Jesus "who of God *is* made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption." "Christ in you the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). Not the glory of the future, but the glory of Christly

character here and now, the glory of deliverance from the smiling ease with which old faiths are chucklingly thrown off and doubts grinningly taken on, the glory of deliverance from the intellectual conceit unaware of the rattle of its dry bones, the glory of deliverance from the superficial mental illumination that lacks the urge of sacrificial passion, the glory of dominion over sin, the glory of Christ enunciating himself in the precincts of personality, the glory of deliverance from the tragedy of contracting spiritual boundaries after we have extended intellectual frontiers! And, beyond these, the glory of the reality and the fruits of a regenerate heart!

And we must remember that all this centers in Calvary's Cross. The salvation of every believer rests upon three facts. First, the fact that justice has been satisfied. Second, the fact that the law has been honored. Third, the fact that God has been glorified. And all this is done at and in and by the Cross of Jesus. At and in and by his Cross justice has been fully and completely satisfied, the law has been gloriously honored, and God has been mightily glorified.

Somewhere, from some mouth touched as with fire from God's altar, I remember to have heard this, which stirred my heart, though I may not recall the exact words: "The history of human guilt culminates in the Cross. The purposes of divine love are made intelligible at the Cross. The rays

of glory emanating from Christ are focussed in the Cross. The fingers of prophecy point to the Cross. The mysteries of prophecy are unraveled at the Cross. The hieroglyphics of the types find their key at the Cross. The great problem of human redemption is solved at the Cross. The serpent's head is bruised at the Cross. The door of Heaven is opened at the Cross. The fountain of salvation is unsealed at the Cross. The streams of civilization rise at the Cross.

"AND—all the great events of the gospel yield in importance to the Cross. The Incarnation was preparatory to the Cross. The Transfiguration foreshadowed the Cross. The Resurrection was the Complement of the Cross. Pentecost was the fruit of the Cross. Bethlehem and Nazareth, Galilee and Jerusalem, Tabor and Olivet, gleam only in the light of the Cross. All the great doctrines of grace revolve around the Cross. Our new life with its peace that passeth all understanding and its joy that is ever rich and abiding is born at the Cross. The world is stripped of its charm at the Cross. Earthly glory fades at the Cross. Intellect is sanctified at the Cross. Sin dies at the Cross. Our condemnation is lifted at the Cross. Our ruin is removed at the Cross. Our death sentence is revoked at the Cross. Our slave chains are snapped at the Cross. The bitters of life are sweetened at the Cross. The shadows of death are dispelled at the Cross. The Heaven of the redeemed is built upon the Cross. The dark-

ness of eternity is irradiated at the Cross! Hallelujah for the Cross!"

And, while we live, we will never cease to praise him, our God, that he who *was* "made flesh" and who *was* "made of a woman" and who *was* "made under the law" and who *was* "made a curse" and who *was* "made sin" *is* made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30). Amen!

VII

PAY DAY—SOMEDAY

"Go down to meet Ahab, king of Israel, and thou shalt speak unto him saying, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine."—I Kings 21:18-19.

"The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel!"—I Kings 21:23.

I introduce to you Naboth, a devout Israelite, who lived in the foothill village of Jezreel. From his home on the hillside he could look far down the valley of Esdraelon. He was a good man—a man who "abhorred that which is evil and clave to that which is good." He would not exchange his heavenly principles for loose expediences. He would not dilute the stringency of personal righteousness for questionable compromises. Now Naboth had a vineyard surrounding his home. This vineyard, fragrant with blossoms in the days of the budding branch and freighted with fruit in the days of the vintage, was a cherished inheritance of the family. This vineyard was near to the summer palace of Ahab, situated about twenty miles from Samaria.

I introduce to you Ahab. Ahab had command of a nation's wealth and commanded the armies of Israel, but he had no command of his lusts and ap-

petites. Ahab wore rich robes, but had a sinning and wicked and troubled heart beneath them. Ahab ate the richest food the world could supply, and this food was served him on fine dishes and by servants obedient to his every beck and nod, and yet he had a starved soul. Ahab lived in palaces, sumptuous within and without, yet tormented himself for one bit of land more. Ahab was king, with a crown and scepter and a throne, yet he was under the thumb of a wicked woman. Ahab is pilloried in contempt of all right-living, God-fearing men through history as a mean rascal, the curse of his country. The Bible gives us a better and more apt introduction in these words: "There was none like unto Ahab, who did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up!" (I Kings 21:25).

I introduce to you Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of Tyre (I Kings 16:31). A woman infinitely more daring and reckless than her husband. A devout worshiper of Baal, she hated any and all who spoke against her false and helpless god. She was as blunt in her wickedness and as brazen in her lewdness, doubtless, as Cleopatra, fair sorceress of the Nile. She had something of the subtle and successful scheming of a Lady Macbeth, something of the genius of a Mary Queen of Scots, something of the beauty of a Marie Antoinette. Much of that which is bad in the worst of women found expression through this painted viper of Israel. She had

all that fascinating endowment of nature which a good woman ought always to dedicate to the service of her generation. But, alas, she became the evil genius which wrought wreck and blight and death.

I introduce to you Elijah, prophet of God. Heir to the infinite riches of God, he! Attended by the hosts of heaven, he! Almost always alone, he, but never lonely, for God was with him. He wore a rough sheepskin cloak, but there was a peaceful, confident heart beneath it. He ate bird's food and widow's fare, but was a physical and spiritual athlete. He had no lease of office or authority, yet everyone obeyed him. He grieved only when God's cause seemed tottering. He passed from earth without dying—into celestial glory. Everywhere where courage is admired and manhood honored and service appreciated he is honored as one of earth's heroes and one of heaven's saints. He was "a seer, and saw clearly; a hero, and dared valiantly; a great heart, and felt deeply."

And now with these four persons introduced we want to turn to God's Word and see the tragedy of pay day someday! We will see "the corn they put into the hopper" and then behold "the grist that came out the spout."

I—A REAL ESTATE REQUEST—"Give me thy vineyard."

"And it came to pass after these things that Naboth, the Jezreelite, had a vineyard which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab, king of Samaria. And Ahab spake unto

Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good unto thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money." (I Kings 21:1-2.)

Thus far Ahab was quite within his rights! Perfectly fair was Ahab in this request, and, under circumstances ordinary, one would have expected Naboth to put away any mere sentimental attachment for the pleasure of the king, especially when the king's aim was not to cheat him or to defraud him. Ahab had not, however, counted upon the reluctance of all Jews to part with their inheritance of land. By peculiar tenure every Israelite held his land, and to all land-holding transactions there was another party, even God, "who made the heavens and the earth." Throughout Judah and Israel, Jehovah was the real owner of the soil; and every tribe received its territory and every family its inheritance by lot from him, with the added condition that "the land should not be sold forever" —Taylor. "The land shall not be sold forever, for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me" (Lev. 25:23). "So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe, for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers . . . but every one of the tribes of the children of Israel shall keep himself to his own inheritance" (Num. 36:7-9). The reluctance and refusal of many Jews to part with their inheritance of land

was, as we readily see, a religious feeling, enforced and illustrated by the Bible.

So, though he was Ahab's nearest neighbor, Naboth stood firmly on his rights, and with an expression of horror on his face and in his words, refused to sell his vineyard to the king. Feeling that he must prefer the duty he owed to God to any danger that might arise from man, he made firm refusal. Fearing God most and man least, and obeying the one whom he feared the most and loved the most, he said: "The Lord forbid it me that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee" (I Kings 21:3). True to the religious teachings of his father, with "real-hearted loyalty to the covenant God of Israel," he believed that he held the land in fee simple from God. His father and grandfather had owned the land before him. All the memories of childhood were tangled in its grape vines. His father's hands, folded now in the dust of death, had used the pruning blade among the branches, and because of this every branch and vine was dear. His mother's hands, now doubtless wrapped in dust-stained shroud, had gathered purple clusters from those bunch laden boughs, and for this reason he loved every spot in his vineyard and every branch on his vines. The ties of sentiment, of religion, and of family pride bound and endeared him to the place. So his refusal to sell was quick, firm, final, and courteous. Then, too, doubtless working or resting or strolling as he often did in his vineyard

hard by the king's castle, Naboth had had glimpses of strange and alien sights in that palace. He had seen with his own eyes what orgies idolatry led to when the queen was at home in her palace in Jezreel; and Naboth, deeply pious, felt smirched and hurt at the very request. He felt that his little plot of ground, so rich in prayer and fellowship, so sanctified with sweet and holy memories, would be tainted and befouled and cursed forever if it came into the hands of Jezebel. So, with "the courage of a bird that dares the wild sea," he took his stand against the king's proposal.

II—THE POUTING POTENTATE—"He came to his house heavy and displeased."

Naboth's quick and firm and final and courteous refusal "took all the spokes from the wheels" of Ahab's plans and desires. The stream of his desire ran against a barrier that turned it aside and changed it into a foiled and foaming whirlpool of sullen sulks. "And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him, for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread" (I Kings 21:4).

What a ridiculous picture! A king acting like a spoiled child, impotent in disappointment and ugly in petty rage. A king whining like a sick hound. A king pouting like a spoiled and sullen child. He

went to bed in the middle of the day, and "turned his face to the wall," his lips swollen with his mulish moping, his eyes full of cheap anger fire, his heart stubborn in its petty rebellion. Servants brought him his meal, plenteously prepared on platters beautiful, "but he would eat no bread." Doubtless musicians came to play skillfully on stringed instruments, but he drove them away with imperious gesture and impatient growlings. He turned from the victuals as one turns from garbage and refuse. He is a low slave to dirt-cheap triviality. His spirit is enslaved by "cheap cobwebs." What fine powers dedicated to mean, ugly, petty things! Think of it! In the middle of the day the commander of an army captured by pouts. A monarch moaning and blubbering and growlingly refusing to eat because a man, a good man, a man who "feared the Lord," because of religious principles would not sell a little vineyard that was his by inheritance from his fathers. Ahab had lost nothing. Ahab had gained nothing. No one had injured him. Yet he, a king, had acted like a blubbering baby. Cannon ability was expressing itself in popgun achievement! A massive giant sprawling on the bed like a dwarf punily peevish. A lion sulking because it was not granted the cheese in a mouse trap. An eagle wallowing in dirt of his own displeasure like a quarreling sparrow fussily seeking crumbs in the dust of a village street. What a sight! And how modern, in this respect, was Ahab, king of Israel! Yes, an overfed bull bel-

lowing because he was denied one small spot of grazing outside his own pasture lands, was Ahab!

III—THE WICKED WIFE—"But Jezebel, his wife!"

When Ahab would "eat no bread" his servants doubtless went and told Jezebel. What she said to them we know not. What she said to Ahab we do know. Puzzled at the news that her husband would not eat and that he had gone to bed when it was not bedtime, Jezebel sought him out in his room. She found him moaning and peevishly petulant, having refused to eat or to cheer up in the least. At first, in a voice of sweet concern, she sought the reason of his choler. In sweet and anxious concern she asked "Why is thy spirit so sad that thou eatest no bread?" (I Kings 21:5). And then, as the manner of women is unto this day, her hand sought his brow to see if he had "temperature" or if some other ailment other than a "sad spirit" had laid hold upon him. Then he told her, every word full of petulance and mopish peevishness as he spoke: "Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money, or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it; and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard!" (I Kings 21:6).

His words stung like a lash this woman who was never for one minute of any hour burdened with any conscientious regard for the rights of others. Hear her laugh as it rings through the palace like

the shrill cackle of a wild fowl that has found a serpent in its nest? Hear her laugh that prods old Ahab like an ox driver prods with sharp iron the ox that came to a ditch and was afraid to cross it? Hear the profuse and harsh laughter of this old gay and gaudy peafowl who prods with her tongue this king of hers for a buffoon and sordid jester? What hornet-like sting in her sarcasm! What tiger-fang and wolf-tusk keenness in her reproaches! What bitter bitterness in the teasing taunts she hurled at him for his scrupulous timidity! Her bosom was heaving, her eyes were flashing under the surge of hot anger that swept over her.

"Are you not the king of this country?" she chides bitingly, her tongue sharp like a butcher's blade. "Cannot you command and have it done?" she scolds as a common village hag who has more noise than wisdom in her words. "Can you not seize and keep?" she cries with reproach. "I thought you told me you were king in these parts! And here you are crying like a baby and will not eat anything because you do not have courage to take a bit of land. You! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! You the king of Israel, and allow yourself to be disobeyed and defied by a common clodhopper from the country. You have been more courteous and considerate of him than you have of your queen! Shame on you! But you leave it to me, old dear! I will get the vineyard for you, and all that I require is that you ask no questions. Leave it to me, Bo!"

"And Jezebel, his wife, said unto him, Dost thou not now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry; I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth, the Jezreelite!" (I Kings 21:7).

Her rejoinder to his weakness reminds us so much of Lady Macbeth's rebuke to Macbeth on the night of King Duncan's murder, when he came back with the daggers in his hand, trembling all over, and she asked him to take the daggers back to the murder spot and "smear the sleepy grooms with blood." "Infirm of purpose; give me the daggers!" Or her words make us to think of other words Lady Macbeth spoke when she was working to get Macbeth's courage to the "sticking place";

"Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dressed yourself? hath it slept since?
And wakes it now to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? . . . Art thou afraid
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteemest the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem?"

Ahab knew Jezebel well enough to know assuredly that she would do what she said she would do. So he came out of his sulks, slowly, as a turtle drags itself from the slime, and asked her how she was going to do it. She, if she acted as human nature naturally expressive acts, tickled him under the chin or pecked him on the cheeks kissingly with lips

screwed into a tight knot, and said: "That's my secret just now; just leave it to me, Honey!"

Now, let us ask, who can so inspire a man to noble purposes as a noble woman? And who can so thoroughly degrade a man as a wife of unworthy tendencies? Back of the statement "And Ahab the son of Ormi did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him" (I Kings 16:30) and back of what Elijah spoke, "Thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord" (I Kings 21:25) is the statement explaining both the other statements: "Whom Jezebel his wife stirred up." She was the polluted reservoir from which the streams of his iniquity found mighty increase. She was the poisonous pocket from which his cruel fangs fed. She was the burning pit wherein his sulphurous cruelties were born. I suppose that Ahab considered himself the master of his wife, but it was her mastery over him that stirred him up to more and mightier wickedness than his own heart was capable of conceiving, more than his own will was capable of executing. Even as later it was a woman, Lucrezia Borgia, who dominated the papacy in its most shameful days, and Catherine de Medici who really ordered the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, and a woman's fury which breathed through Robespierre, so it was a woman, a passionate and ambitious idolatress, even Jezebel, who mastered Ahab. Take the staring crimes of any age, and at the bottom more or less consciously concerned, the

world, almost invariably, finds a woman. Only God Almighty knows the full story of the foul plots hatched by women. This was true, as we shall presently see, with the two under discussion now. But let me say, incidentally, if women have mastered men for evil, they have also mastered them for good—and we gladly assert that some of the tallest flowers of our civilization were planted by our women. But we must not depart further from the objective of this message to discuss that. Let us come to the next terrible scene in this tragedy of sin.

IV—A MESSAGE MEANING MURDER—"She wrote letters."

Jezebel wrote letters to the elders of Jezreel. And in these letters she made definite and subtle declaration that some terrible sin had been committed in their city, for which it was needful that a fast should be proclaimed in order to avert the wrath of Heaven.

"She wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people, and set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying Thou didst blaspheme God and the king; and then carry him out and stone him, that he may die" (I Kings 21: 8-10).

Surely black ink never wrote a fouler plot or death scheme on white paper since writing was known among men. Every drop had in it the adder's poison. Every syllable of every word of every sentence was full of hate toward him who had done only good continually. Every letter of every syllable was but the thread which, united with other threads, made the hangman's noose for him who had not changed his righteous principles for the whim of a king. The whole letter was a diabolical death-warrant.

The letters being written, they must be sealed; and the sealing was done, as all those matters of letter writing and sealing were done, by rubbing ink on the seal, moistening the paper, and pressing the seal thereon. And when Jezebel had finished with her iniquitous pen, she asked Ahab for his signet ring; with that ring she affixed the royal seal. "She sealed them with Ahab's ring!" When Ahab gave it to her he knew it meant crime of some sort, but he asked no questions. Moreover, Jezebel's deeds showed that when she went down to market, as it were, she would have in her basket a nice vineyard for her husband when she returned. She said to herself: "This man Naboth has refused my honorable lord on religious grounds, and by all the gods of Baal, I will get him yet on these very same grounds." She understood perfectly the passion of a devout Jew for a public fast; and she knew that

nothing would keep Naboth away. He and every member of his household would be there.

"Proclaim a fast"! Fasting has ever been a sign of humiliation before God, of humbling one's self in the dust before the "high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity." The idea in calling for a fast was clearly to declare that the community was under the anger of God on account of a grave crime committed by one of its members, which crime is to be exposed and punished. Then, too, the fast involved a cessation of work, a holiday, so that the citizens would have time to attend the public gathering.

"Set Naboth on high"! "On high" meant before the bar of justice, not in the seat of honor. "On high" meant in the seat of the accused, and not in the seat to be desired. "On high" meant that Naboth was put where every eye could watch him closely and keenly observe his bearing under the accusation. "And set two men, base fellows, before him." How illegal she was in bringing about his death in a legal way! For the law required two witnesses in all cases where the punishment was death. "At the mouth of two or three witnesses shall he be put to death" (Deut. 17:6). The witnesses required by Jezebel were men of no character, men who would take bribes and swear to any lie for gain.

"And let them bear witness against him!" In other words, put him out of the way by judicial murder, not by private assassination. "And then

carry him out and stone him that he may die"! A criminal was not to be executed within a city, as that would defile it. Thus Christ was crucified outside the walls of Jerusalem! We see that Jezebel took it for granted that Naboth would be condemned. And so one day while Naboth worked in his vineyard the letters came down to Jezreel. And one evening while Naboth talked at his cottage door with his children, the message of murder was known to the elders of the city. And that night while he slept with the wife of his bosom, the shadow of death was creeping toward him every hour. The message meaning murder was known to many but not to him until they came and told him that a fast had been proclaimed—proclaimed because God had been offended at some crime and that his wrath must be appeased and the threatening anger turned away, and he himself, all unconscious of any offense toward God or the king, set in the place of the accused, even "on high!"

V—THE FATAL FAST—"They proclaimed a fast."

"They proclaimed a fast." And what concern that must have created in the household of Naboth —when they knew that Naboth was to be "set on high," even in the "seat of the accused," even "before the bar of 'justice' "! And what excitement there was in the city. Curious throngs hurried to the fast to see him who had been accused of the

crime which made necessary the appeasing of the threatening wrath of an angered God.

Yes, the rulers of Jezreel, "either in dread of offending one whose revenge they knew was terrible, or eager to do a service to one to whom in temporal matters they were so largely indebted, or moved with envy against their own iniquity, carried out her instructions to the letter." They were ready and efficient tools in her hands. No doubt she had tested their character as her "butcher boys" in the slaughter of the prophets of the Lord (I Kings 18:4, 13).

Endicott, in his comment on this tragic scene, says: "The programme, which may have been a familiar one in those wicked days, was carried out exactly as planned. The charge was made, a double charge, of treason and blasphemy, and this double charge was "substantiated" by false witnesses. With a great show of zeal for God and the king a band of hired ruffians seized the ill-fated Naboth, carried him out of the city, and, using the cruel, old punishment for his alleged crime, stoned him to death!"

And then, to make sure that his heirs would not and might not lay claim to the inheritance, his sons also were slain (II Kings 9:26). Even had this not been so, the property of executed traitors would naturally fall to the king, although no enactment to this effect is found in the law.

Jezebel had planned that, when the fast was at its height and the religious frenzy, or enthusiasm,

of the Jew had been fanned to a white heat, she would have two men rise up and accuse Naboth. And they did! Vulture mouths testifying, that the eagle's talons might hold unto death! Swine snouts grunting out complaint that the swine tusks might be strong unto fatal wounding. "And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him; and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king" (I Kings 21:13).

Thus it came to pass that in an orderly fashion, in the name of religion and in the name of the king, they stoned Naboth and his kin to death. And Naboth, really fell, not by the king's hand, but by the condemnation of his fellow citizens. Yes, the old-fashioned conservatism of Naboth was, in the judgment of many, sorely out of place in that "progressive" state of society. No doubt Naboth's righteous austerity had made him extremely unpopular in many ways in "progressive Jezreel." And since Jezebel carried out her purpose in a perfectly legal and orderly way and in a "wonderfully" democratic manner, we see a fine picture of autocracy working by democratic methods.

And when these "loyally patriotic citizens" of Jezreel had left the bodies of Naboth and his sons to be devoured by the wild dogs which prowled after nightfall in and around the city, they sent and told Queen Jezebel that her bloody orders had

been bloodily and completely obeyed! "Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned and is dead." (I Kings 21:14).

She received the news gladly, even with no attempt to hide her satisfaction. What was it to her that outside the city walls was the body of a good man whose bones the dogs would gnaw? What was it to her that, with the strength of youth still on their brows, there were the faces of his sons stone-bruised and torn by the fangs of hungry scavengers? What was it to her that God's holy name had been profaned? What was it to her that religion had been dishonored? What did she care if justice had been outraged just so she had gotten the little plot of land close by their summer palace of ivory? What pang did it give her heart that innocent blood had been shed? Nothing.

Trippingly, as a gay dancer, she hurried in to where Ahab sat. With profuse caresses and words glib with joy she told him the "good" news. She had about her the triumphant manner of one who has accomplished successfully what others had not dared attempt. Her "tryout" in getting the vineyard was a decided "triumph." She had "pulled the stunt." She had been "brave" and "wise"—and because of this her husband now could arise and hie him down to the vineyard and call it his own. "And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard

of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead!" (I Kings 21:15). And it was the plot hatched in her own mind and it was her hand, her lily white hand, her queen's hand, that wrote the letters that made this tragic statement true.

VI—THE VISIT TO THE VINEYARD—"Ahab arose up to go down to the vineyard."

How Jezebel must have "strutted her stuff" before Ahab when she went with tidings that the vineyard which he wanted to buy was now his for nothing! How keen must have been the sarcasm of her attitude when she made it known by word and manner that she had succeeded where he failed—and at less cost. How gloatingly victorious were the remarks which she made which kept him warmly reminded that she had kept her "sacred" promise! What a lovely fabric, stained and dyed red with Naboth's blood, she spread before him for his "comfort" from the loom of her evil machinations.

"And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it!" (I Kings 21:16).

Yes, Naboth, the good man who "feared the Lord," is dead; and Ahab expresses no condemnation of this awful conspiracy, culminating in such a tragic horror. Though afraid or restrained by his conscience from committing murder himself, he had

no scruple in availing himself of the results of such crime when perpetrated by another. He flattered himself that, by the splendid genius of his queen in bloody matters, he, though having no part in the crime which did Naboth to death, he might, as well as another, "receive the benefit of his dying."

And now Jehu and Bidcar, the royal charioteers, are called for. They are given orders to prepare the royal chariot. The gilded chariot is drawn forth. And soon, Jehu and Bidcar, furious charioteers in the service of the king, are directing the brief journey of the gilded chariot to Jezreel, just twenty miles away. Ahab rode in something of military state. His outriders drive down with him as he goes, proudly and gratefully, to take possession of the desired vineyard, gift of the queen to him. All the way from Samaria he congratulates himself, doubtless, that he has such a woman for a wife, so talented she was and successful in "putting things over!"

As he goes the voice of Jehu, as he restrains the fiery horses, or the lash of his whip as he urges them on, attracts the attention of the grazing cattle in adjacent pasture land. The sound of clanking hoofs of cantering horses resounds in every glen by the roadway. The gilded chariot catches the light of the sun and reflects it brightly, but he who rides therein is unmindful of the bloodstains on the ground where Naboth died. Dust clouds arise from the chariot's wheels and wild winds blow them across

the fields where the plowman or the reaper wonders who goes so swiftly along the highway. The neighing steeds announce to all that Ahab's royal horses tire not in carrying him down from Samaria to Jezreel. And soon many know that the chariot carried the king who was going down to possess what had reverted to the crown, even the vineyard of Naboth which Naboth refused to sell to him. Would the "game" be worth the "candle"? Would Ahab learn that sin buys pleasure at the price of peace? We shall see—and that right soon!

VII—THE ALARMING APPEARANCE—"The word of the Lord came to Elijah."

The brief journey from Samaria to Jezreel is over. The restlessly prancing and easily panting horses are brought to a stop outside the gate to the vineyard. Strong hands of ready servants hold the fiery horses by the bits; the hands of servants open the gates; the bodies of the obedient servants bow courteously as Ahab enters the vineyard. Naboth is dead, and the coveted vineyard is now Ahab's through the "gentle scheming" of the queen of his house. Perhaps Ahab, as he walks through the garden, sees Naboth's footprints in the soil. Or he sees Naboth's pruning hook among the vines. Or he notices the fine trellis work which Naboth's hands had fastened together for the growing vines. Perhaps in a corner of the vineyard is a seat where Naboth and his sons rested after the day's toil, or a well

where sparkling waters refreshed the thirsty or furnished water for the vines in time of drouth.

And even then out yonder somewhere God is talking to Elijah, his prophet whom we introduced to you a bit ago. And this is the record: "And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who is in Samaria; behold he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it. And thou shalt speak unto him saying, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord!" (I Kings 21:17-19).

And while Ahab strolls among the vines that Naboth tended, what is it appears? Snarling wild beasts? No. Black clouds full of threatening storm? No, not that. Flaming lightning which dazzles him? No. War chariots of his ancient enemies rumbling along the road? No. An oncoming flood sweeping things before it? No; not a flood. A tornado goring the earth? No. A huge serpent threatening to encircle him and crush his bones in its deadly coils? No—not a serpent. What then? What alarmed Ahab so? Let us follow him and see.

As Ahab went walking through the rows of vines, he begins to plan how he will have that vineyard arranged by his royal gardener—how flowers will be here and vegetables yonder and herbs there. As he converses with himself, suddenly a shadow falls

across his path. Quick as a flash Ahab whirls on his heels, and there, before him, stands Elijah, prophet of the living God. Elijah's cheeks are swarthy; his eye is keen and piercing; like coals of fire, his eyes burn with righteous indignation in their sockets; his bosom heaves; his head is held high. His only weapon is a staff; his only robe a sheepskin and a leather girdle about his loins.

To Ahab there is an eternity of agony in the few moments they stand thus, face to face, eye to eye, soul to soul! "And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" (I Kings 21:20). His voice is hoarse, like the cry of a hunted animal. He trembles like a hunted stag before the mouths of fierce hounds. Suddenly his face goes white. His lips quiver.

And Elijah, without a tremor in his voice, his eyes burning their way into Ahab's guilty soul, answered, "I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord." Then, with every word a thunderbolt, and every sentence a withering denunciation Elijah continued: "God told me to ask you this, Hast thou killed and also taken possession? Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. Behold I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity. . . . And will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith

thou hast provoked me to anger and made Israel to sin!" And then, plying other words mercilessly like a terrible scourge to the cringing Ahab, Elijah said "And of Jezebel also spake the Lord, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel! Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat."

And with these words making Ahab to cower as one cowers and recoils from a hissing adder, Elijah went his way.

VIII—PAY DAY—SOMEDAY.

Yes, the evil spoken by Elijah did come. Pay day came as certainly as the night followed the day. Let us note how it came, and when.

Consider how it came to Ahab! God spoke, and God said that the king's life was forfeit, and the lives of all that could succeed him on the throne, whatever their age. The destruction that had fallen on the preceding dynasties of Jeroboam and Baasha would fall upon Ahab's. They were not even to have decent burial, God said. Those that died in the city the dogs should eat, God said. Those that died in the field, the buzzards should eat, God said. Queen Jezebel herself, sometime, somewhere, was to be a feast for dogs, God said.

Ahab entered into league with Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah. In disguise Ahab entered the battle against his old Syrian enemies. At Ramoth-Gilead

a random arrow mortally wounded him, so that his chariot was filled with blood (I Kings 22:34-35). And they took his body to Samaria. "And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armor, *according unto the word of the Lord which he spake*" (I Kings 22:38). God said it—and it was done.

So did Ahaziah, Ahab's son, and Joram meet violent deaths. We know. Now consider Jezebel, and when her pay day came. We learn as we think of her death that "the stag followed by hungry hounds with open mouths is far more happy than the woman who is pursued by her sins, that the bird taken in the fowler's net and laboring to escape is far more happy than she who has woven about herself a web of deception, that yon eagle beating against brass bars is far happier than the woman whose sin stares at her from dark rooms at midnight, and that the wild animal caught and suffering in the jaws of a steel trap is far happier than he who carries a guilty conscience in his bosom!"

"And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it." Pause. Who is Jehu? He is the one who, twenty years before the events of this chapter from which we quote, rode down with Ahab to take Naboth's vineyard, the one who throughout those twenty years never forgot those withering words of terrible denunciation which Elijah spoke. And who is Jezebel? Oh! The very same one who wrote the letters and had Naboth put to death. And what

is Jezreel? The place where Naboth had his vineyard and where Naboth died, his life pounded out by stones in the hands of ruffians. "And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, Had Zimri peace who slew his master?" Pause again just here. "Had Zimri peace who slew his master?" No; "there is no peace saith my God to the wicked." "And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side? Who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down, and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses; and he trode her under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her, for she is a king's daughter. And they went to bury her, but they found no more than her skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, This is the word of the Lord, which he spoke by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel!" (II Kings 9:30-36).

"This is the word of the Lord which he spake by his servant Elijah!" Yes, and from this we learn the power and certainty of God in carrying out his own retributive providence, that men might know that his justice slumbereth not. Even though

the mill of God grinds slowly, it grinds to powder; "and though his judgments have leaden heels, they have iron hands."

And when I see Ahab fall in his chariot and when I see the dogs eating Jezebel by the walls of Jezreel, I say, as the Scripture saith: "O, that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments; then had thy peace been like a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea!" And as I remember that the gains of ungodliness are weighted with the curse of God, I ask you, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not?"

VIII

EXCELLENCIES AT AHAVA

"There, at the river of Ahava."—Ezra 8:21.

The river of Ahava does not live as spectacularly in history as does the Nile up which Cleopatra, the fair sorceress of Egypt, sailed with boat of silken sails and silver oars, and on the watery bosom of which floated the little boat that carried Moses—Moses, then a tiny babe, afterwards a mighty leader.

The river of Ahava does not live in history as does the Jordan in whose waters our Lord Jesus was baptized by the great wilderness preacher. Nor is it spoken of by the pen of historians as is the Delaware which Washington crossed when it was choked with stubborn ice. Nor does it occupy as large a place in the "hall of fame" as do the Tiber and the Mississippi. Nor do men think as often of it as they do of the Thames which carries many ships out to and from the open seas. Nor is it embalmed in panegyric as is the Hudson with its Palisades. Nor is it enshrined in song as is the Rhine. Nor is it accorded a place on the map equal to that occupied by the Ohio and the Danube and the Amazon. Nor is it

spoken of in eloquence by orators as orators speak of the Marne where men died to make secure the imperilled liberties of the world. Nor can it boast that a world-conqueror, like Napoleon, ever contemplated suicide by its banks as once he did by the Seine. Nor can it be said that it is a sepulcher for any great adventurer. But vividly, even gloriously, as full-tide streams wash the edge of meadow lands, does the river of Ahava flow through the shallows and depths of men's minds as they think and when they think toward and upon the eighth chapter of Ezra.

Permit us to recall a few facts. The ten Northern tribes of the children of Israel, by the revolt instituted by Jeroboam, broke away from political union with Judah and Simeon, the two Southern tribes, and repudiated Rehoboam. This day of the revolt was the last meeting of united Israel. The work of 120 years under Saul, David, and Solomon was undone.

The tragic outcome of this revolt was that the Northern kingdom pursued its course of approximately two hundred and fifty years under a score of kings of ten different dynasties—all wicked—until carried away into captivity and oblivion by Assyria in 721 B. C. Would that we could take time to have a post-mortem inquiry into the diseases that killed a kingdom. Suffice it to say "the mountain tops of the holy land that had been consecrated to Jehovah and that were to be kissed by

the feet of the Son of God smoked with the impure incense of awful worship." "So Israel was carried out of their own land into Assyria unto this day!"

The Southern kingdom of Judah lengthened its career to 388 years under a score of kings of the house of David, when Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came and took the nation into captivity—606 B. C. —for 70 years. Jeremiah predicted (Jer. 29:10) the overthrow of Babylon and the release and return of the exiled people of the Southern kingdom.

And there *was* a return from captivity—in three sections, at three different times. In 535 B. C. a company under Zerubbabel, laying the temple foundations. In 459 B. C. a company under Ezra, restoring the law and the ritual. In 445 B. C. a company under Nehemiah, repairing the walls of Jerusalem and re-establishing the civil authority.

But our message now is of the company under Ezra who, on their return four and one half centuries before Christ, came to the river of Ahava. Consider, I pray you, the excellencies of what took place there and what Ezra led the people to do there.

I—THE EXCELLENCY OF PAUSE.

Ezra says in his personal memoirs: "These are now the chief of their fathers, and this is the generation of them that went up with me from Babylon, in the reign of Artaxerxes the king" (Ezra

8:1). And then this: "And I gathered them together to the river that runneth to Ahava and there abode we in tents three days."

There we see the excellency of pause, of stopping. Ezra is on a long journey—a journey sufficiently long to require four months in which to make it (Ezra 7:9). There were frail little women in the group; there were some tender little children in the company; there were some, no doubt, who were frail with the infirmities of old age; all these had their faces turned away from exile. Yet Ezra had time to stop for three days, though the long distance between them and their destination urged that they travel early and travel late, travel strenuously and vigilantly. He knew the wisdom of the journey. He knew the waste of failure to pause.

They had much treasure along (Ezra 8:26-29). And there were robbers bold and plunderers daring in ambush and in bold disguise on the highway that led away from exile—and the sooner the treasures were in Jerusalem the better? Well, yes. Yet Ezra "gathered them together to the river that runneth to Ahava" and stopped there three days. Wise was this man Ezra—centuries ago. Would that we were as wise today.

In our hurried days we do not take enough time for the pause. We know much of the exclamation-point life and the question-mark life but little enough of the period life. We possess little of the excellency of knowing how to stop or when to stop

or what to do with ourselves when, perchance, we do stop more under coercion than under desire. Guiltily guilty are we of reckless rush, of precipitant push, of frantic gestures that say, "Move on!"; of straining faces, oft harassed and haggard, that say "Do not stop me!" We are often blind to the red light that says "Stop" and to the green light that says "Slow up!"

The cloister, where and when men shut themselves away in idle seclusion from the affairs of the outside world, as one who goes into a barrel through the bung hole and then closes the bung hole from within, was bad. But the whirlpool into which men plunge themselves night and day, most of the night and most of the days, is also bad. Many there are in the dizzy whirlpool of business and pleasure into which men plunge themselves with such abandon who have no time for the inner closet, no time for the quiet retreat, but much time for the busy highways, for the chattering market places, for the clattering streets, for elbow-rubbing and shoulder-pushing with restless throngs.

Many there are who prefer the limelight, the footlights, the spectacular. While they censure those who seem as "breathless statues" "faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null," they themselves never see themselves as whirling dervishes chattering noisily, moving ceaselessly on the edges of precipitous slopes. We have been taught so much the art of being strenuous, we have well-nigh

forgotten how to stop, how to be still, how to use the brakes wisely. We have an idea, it seems, that nothing is being done unless somebody is talking loudly or waving a gaudy banner at the head of a noisy procession. Have we forgotten and are we failing to teach that Moses was in the desert forty years? that John the Baptist was in the wilderness a long while? that Paul was in Arabia also?

It is the thrill people seek nowadays—everywhere. We are living in a day of "thrills." Advertisements run this way: "Great sensations! See this movie!" or "Every reel a thrill" or "Read the last novel by Shocker; it is a thriller!" or "Roof garden theater!—Every act a thrill!" or "See the Wild West picture! A hair raiser! Don't miss it!" And how often we read things like this in the newspapers: "Hair raising auto races! Thrilling scenes as the daredevils whirl around small corners! It will give you the sensation of your life! Not a dull minute from start to finish! Two drivers killed yesterday! Several world records broken!" That, all that, much more than that, in an age that will not listen when one would stress the importance of pause.

Are we not money mad? Pleasure mad? Ambition mad? Mad for everything but heaven and eternity? Are we not in large measure giving the sidetrack and the passing glance to those things that make for truth and righteousness and everlasting

imperishables? Do we not live more in the daily newspapers and the sport columns than in the Bible? Are we not so intent on reading the morning news that we fail to read the messages that are written across the skies? Is there not too much "talking nonsense on the edge of an abyss"? Too much seeking for thrills? Too much high appraisal of gaudy artificiality? Too much blindness to the *peril* of the artificial? With all our straining up into the heavens and with all our plunging down into the depths and with all our "thrilling" exploits on land and sea, are we not in danger of missing the secret of the Lord?

How we need to learn from Ezra who gathered the people together at the river of Ahava! How we really need to pray and to desire in our lives the fulfillment of this prayer:

"Drop thy still dews of quietness
Till all our strivings cease.
Take from our lives the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace!

"Breathe through the pulses of desire
Thy coolness and thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, its beats expire,
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire
O still small voice of peace!"

"Be still, and know that I am God!" God give us power properly to pause.

II—THE EXCELLENCY OF ENLISTMENT.

"And I viewed the people and the priests, and found there none of the sons of Levi!" (Ezra 8:15).

These words showed that Ezra discovered that there were absentees. He found there "none of the sons of Levi." The missing folks. So Ezra began the work of enlistment. He sent some of the chief men, Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, Meshullum, Joiarib, men of understanding, to Iddo, "at the place Casiphia" with a commandment showing the need for ministers for the house of God (Ezra 8:17).

These ambassadors were successful. They persuaded both the Levites and the Nethinim to join the caravan. The Nethinim were descendants of the Gibeonites who deceived Joshua, and whom God gave to the Levites to be their hewers of wood and drawers of water. Once aliens and false, but now Israelites without guile. Thus God, in his work of enlistment, increases the soldiers and the servitors whom he can turn to good account.

The good work of enlistment must go on today. Ezra found it an important work. So do we find it an important and sadly neglected work. As long as there are "fields white already unto the harvest" and reapers few and many standing idly by, there will be need for enlistment. For how like the experience of Ezra "at the river that runneth to Ahava" is the experience of ministers today—in

village churches, in country churches, in city churches, everywhere.

How often when the preacher views his people as he sees them stand for the doxology does he see there "none of the sons of Levi"! How often when he sees them rise for the benediction does he, "viewing the congregational landscape o'er," see empty pews which ought to have been occupied by "the sons of Levi"—pews which made no offering, pews which made no prayer, pews which sang no song, pews which had no responsive smile and no glistening eyes to help on the service. Ezra "saw there none of the sons of Levi!" And Ezra, the responsibilities of leadership upon him, felt as leaders often feel today. And leaders today, finding the empty places staring at them, and the "missing Thomases" not with them, feel as Ezra felt.

If preachers, if leaders of civic-righteousness causes, were today to write their personal memoirs, some would say: "On Sunday I viewed the people and found there none of the Smith family—they had gone to the seashore. As I viewed the people I found there none of the golfers—they were out 'worshiping God just as much and just as well,' on the 'links that lure.' I found there none of the Jones family—they 'had company'—company who did not come prepared and with the intention of going to church. And I found there none of the Lie-Around family—they were buried in gaudy Sunday morning 'funnies' or reading the latest scandals of

the divorce courts. And when I viewed the people this morning when they rose for the doxology, I saw there none of the Sleep-late family—they were indulging themselves in 'a little more slumber, a little more sleep.' And when I viewed the people as I looked here and there during my sermon, I saw there none of the sons of Brother and Sister Massey. *They* were there, these two good old faithful followers of Christ, but their sons and daughters have decided it is too old fashioned to walk in the way of their father and mother. So they were off on the highways in speeding autos, dashing here and there, and nowhere in particular, 'eating nobody's dust!' And when I viewed the people from my pulpit I saw not John Caine. John is a fine young business man, and he promised his mother before she died that he would honor her God with attendance on his house and by keeping His precepts. But John has forgotten and broken his promise and cares so little for her grave as to walk away and go fishing—while the house of God and the preacher need his presence and influence. And when I viewed the people I saw there none of Mrs. Wofford's daughters who had been off to college. At college they had 'grown so cultured' and had 'learned so much' until they were 'high above' the 'common and old-fashioned and out-of-date doings of the church that believes in the miracles of Christ!'" Thus—and on.

"None of the sons of Levi!" How like them are

those today who, by words and acts and attitudes, would put the headlight on the rear! How like them are those today who, though not dead, have the grave clothes of cold-hearted indifference about them! How like them are the "soldiers of the Cross" who today "stay at home" for ailments they do not notice during business hours of the preceding week. How like them are those feeble "oncers" rather than fervent "twicers" at attendance on the services of worship during the Lord's day and fervent and faithful in the services of the church during the week!

"None of the sons of Levi!" So today. Many not in our Sunday schools. Many not in the midweek services! Many never at the night services. Many never inside a church except to attend a funeral or to witness a wedding. Jesus said: "Where are the nine?" Today many feel constrained to ask "Where are the ninety-nine or the ninety times nine?" Some present, but where are many others? Some there, but some absent!

How we need today men and women of whom it can be said as it was said of John Paul Jones: "He fought as though the whole cause of American liberty depended on him!" How the world needs men and women who are ready and willing to do their whole duty—men and women who will wake up, get up, stay up, talk up, pray up, pay up—men and women who will suffer not the Master's work to trail in the dust—men and women who will not

disappoint the Master. To get this and have and hold this we will have to have enlistment plans properly worked, more enlistment power righteously expended. The fields are ready for the reaping now—and yet there are more idle folks than busy folks in many churches. Excellency of enlistment do we need so that there shall be fewer in our ranks who are "dipped and done with," fewer who are in baptism "branded and turned loose," fewer who have talents unused and powers frittered away on things that matter least. Forget it not—the excellency of enlistment!

III—THE EXCELLENCY OF THE RIGHT WAY. "The right way for *us!*"

"Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance!" (Ezra 8:21).

The fast! The humble humbling of themselves before God! The seeking from him of the right way! The right way for themselves! The right way for their children! The right way for their money! How excellent!

"The right way for *us*!"

Ezra wanted their deeds to be in gear with God's thoughts. He and his people wanted their words to be straight, winning and holding God's approval. He wanted, and they wanted, their feet to walk

in the paths which the great God who counts our footsteps approves. He wanted and they wanted their hands to "move at the impulse of his love." He wanted and they wanted their hearts to be in tune with the heart of God. Ezra wanted the deeds of his people to merit God's commendation.

How we ought to want today what Ezra wanted centuries ago—the right way! And the might of the right way! How we need to seek of *God*, not of the "schools and certain poets," not of the philosophies of men, not of the cults, not of scientific guesses, not of books whose bold pages are in shameful antithesis to God's Book, the right way—the straight way. God wants our whole life right—right twenty-four hours in the day and seven days in the week. He wants our whole life stamped, and stamped aright, and stamped for eternity. And there never will be satisfaction on God's part until we get away from the idea that somehow or other we can give God patchwork—give him the cellar and keep the parlor for ourselves—give him the waste drops from the cup overflowing—give him the crumbs from the feast of life—give him the sparks from the fire ever burning.

In this day when ambitious ones would "smile away the blood marks of Cain," is there not need that we seek from God the right way? In this day when there is lechery and treachery in the business world, do we not need to seek of God the right way and follow in it, remembering that a "false balance

is an abomination unto the Lord"? In this day when there is such rebellion on the part of children against parental authority and such shameful rebellion on the part of many parents against the prohibition laws, do we not need a seeking after and a following after the right ways? In this day when there is appalling perfidy and wantonness in annulling marriage vows, do we not need humbly to seek the right way? In this day when some men are "more concerned as to who holds the key to the cash drawer in the office than they are as to who holds their daughter's hand in the parlor," is there not need that we confess our sins, humble ourselves before God, and seek of him the right way? "If my people who are called by my name shall humble themselves and seek my face and pray and turn from their wicked ways then will I hear from heaven and I will forgive their sins and I will heal their land!"

"The right way for our little ones!"

How tragically tragic that some children are more damned into the world than born into it! How sad that many by wrong standards of living and by wrong teachings and by lack of parental authority today are being led into the wrong ways!

Our children mean much to us—even more than words can say. They will someday mean much to somebody else—much in the right way or much in the wrong way. Every child has a right to the right

example, to the right teaching, to the right influences. Every child has a right to the right sort of education; and if Galileo knew that the earth whirls around the sun every child has a right to know it.

Mother, what kind of daughter are you rearing to be somebody's wife? Fathers, what sort of sons are you rearing to be some women's husbands? If I could find today the father and mother of the boy who will someday, doubtless, in a sacred hour, become the husband of my little daughter, I would search them out, even if I had to go around the world to find them, and I would beg them by all that is high in heaven and by all that is sacred in life to keep that boy in the right way, to keep out of his head and out of his heart wrong ideas and wrong ideals and to plant in his head and in his heart, out of which are the issues of life, seeds whose blossom is not red with the blood of crushed hopes, seed whose fruit is not heartache and blight.

How many children today there are who, because of right example denied and right teaching denied and right influence denied, are to be classed with underprivileged children, even though they may lack none of the comforts of civilization—none of our cultural and educational advantages. We need to read today and we need to heed today this from the Bible: "It were better for a man that a millstone be hanged about his neck and he be cast into the depths of the sea than that he should cause one of the least of these little ones to stumble!"

If every rock is a quotation from the quarry, if every flower is a quotation from the garden, if every tree is a quotation from the forest, if children are quotations from our parents, our teachers, our educational systems, our example, our civilization—whither are we bound, to higher heights or to deeper depths? I was talking to a group of twenty-two boys under fourteen one day, and I asked them what known living man of today they would prefer to be if they could change themselves into that man, the answer was rather disappointing. Two said they would rather be Jack Dempsey. Two said they would rather be Ty Cobb. Four said they would rather be Charlie Chaplin. Two said they would rather be "Bo" McMillan. One said he would rather be "Fatty" Arbuckle! (Think of that!) Two said they would rather be Henry Ford. One said he would prefer to be John Rockefeller, Jr. Six said they would rather be "Babe" Ruth. One said he would rather be Thomas Edison. And one said "it didn't make any difference" to him. Think over these answers. The boys of today will be our men tomorrow—when most of us are gone. What sort of tomorrow are we making for future generations?

"The right way for our substance!"

The right way for our money. When Southern Baptists spent ninety seven and one half cents on themselves and two and one half cents for God's

causes last year—do we not need to learn the right way for our money? The average American dollar goes thus, according to a recent advertisement: Twenty-four and one half cents to living costs; twenty-two cents to luxuries; fourteen cents to waste; thirteen and one half cents to miscellaneous; eleven cents to investments; eight and one fourth cents to crime; four and one half cents to government; one and one half cents to education; three fourths of a cent to religion! That is the average American dollar. And at the bottom of the advertisement was this question: "How long will our social structure stand securely on a foundation so scantily supported? Let's put less into other things and more into religion!"

If we seek and find and follow the right way for our substance, will there not be less spent on gasoline and more on the gospel? Less for movies and manicuring and perfuming—if we seek and find and follow the right way for our substance? Less for shows and more for the salvation of the world? Less for gymnastics and more for godliness? Less for fun and fudge and filth and furbelows and more for the right things—things that do not perish with the using?

"We have sent deacons and dignitaries down the aisles to gather up God's profits from his business. They have come back frequently with nickels and dimes, quarters and dollars, and we have received them with all reverence that ought to mark honest

returns of honest investments!" How we do need the shadow of the Cross on our pocketbooks! "Blessed is the man, to himself and to others, who loveth the church with his pocketbook as well as with his heart!" Too many there are to whom this paraphrase is applicable:

"Little member Horner,
Sat in a corner
When the collection plate came by;
Spiritually fickle,
He dropped in a nickel,
And said, 'What a good church member am I!'"

This that follows is often sung in action and attitude and in many ways in our land today:

"How dear to our heart is the old silver dollar,
When some kind dear spender presents it to view!
The Liberty head without necktie or collar,
And all the strange things which to us seem so new.
The wide spreading eagle, the arrows below it,
The stars and the words with the strange things
they tell.
The coin of our fathers, we're glad that we hold it,
For some time or other 'twill come in right well.
The spread-eagle dollar, the star-spangled dollar,
The old silver dollar we all love so well!"

Now Jesus never condemns money in itself nor riches in themselves. Jesus does condemn money as a master of the man who has it and holds it and hoards it. Jesus does condemn in no uncertain tones the devotion to riches which makes a man lose his sense of the value of the better things! And what

Jesus said to the rich young ruler was a special prescription for a special case. But can we call this a Christian country until we spend God's money in more honest ways? And can we expect a revival in this country until we spend at least as much of God's money for higher education, for right education, as we now spend for perfumery and face paint? We must not forget that the spiritual life of an individual rises no higher than the level of his beneficence.

When we give, not from external social pressure, but as a great religious act, as a solemn sacrifice, as a holy thank offering, and not to "save appearances" and not in "cheap rivalry," we come to know then that our scattering is great increase. But if we never get a penny back, we always increase in heart volume, in joy, in love, in peace. The heavens become brighter. Our cup of comfort is sweetened. We walk a greener earth. We look up to God through a bluer sky. Beneficence is its own compensation. The liberal soul shall be made fat! "And he that watereth shall be watered also himself!"

How we need to seek and to find and to follow the right way for our substance—as Ezra and the people did at the river that runneth to Ahava. What an excellent excellency!

IV—THE EXCELLENCY OF BEING ASHAMED.

"And I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horseman to help us against the

enemy in the way, because we had spoken unto the king saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him!" (Ezra 8:22).

Ezra had been letting his light shine in Babylon; and the courts seem to have known the quality of his religion. Was it on the act of faith or "tempting of Providence" to launch out on that trip over a country infested with the pirates of the desert with no other protection than the shield of faith? Say what you will and think what you will as to that, we do know that Ezra possessed the excellency of being ashamed. He had told the king that the hand of God was for good upon those that sought God and sought to do his will. And because of this, even though the pirates of the desert skulked like jackals by the way, Ezra was ashamed to ask for protection from the king. How excellent such shame! Would that we possessed enough of such today. One of our troubles today is that many lack the power to blush. "When Israel forgot how to blush her doom was sealed!" So has it ever been. So will it ever be—with any nation.

Today we lack a great excellency if we are not ashamed of the lawlessness abroad in the land, the toning down of authority. Ashamed! Not attempting a census taking of our shortcomings for the joy of unjust censure, as is the manner of some, not cataloguing the motes in the eyes of others and

overlooking the beams in our own eyes, we do declare that we need the excellency of being ashamed.

Ought not many to be ashamed of the indifference that possesses them, that robs the world of much good? Yea, verily. Dr. Broadus once said: "I have preached when I wished somebody would throw a hymn book at me!" Tired of their indifference was he! Many ought to be ashamed of the empty pews that stare at many preachers today! Ashamed also of the indifference to the treasury often lacking in funds. Ashamed, too, of the indifference, callous and cold, to the character of men who hold public office. Ashamed of the indifference to the things that really make a home. Ashamed of the indifference to ideals being formed in the minds of children.

Ought we not to be ashamed of the selfishness abroad? Yes. "There is that which withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty!" Parker said much when he said: "Selfishness is suicidal; selfishness lives in gloom; selfishness injects poison into every stream of life; selfishness actually makes the world less and less every day, degrades man, dishonors life; it is blasphemy against the infinite goodness and mercy of God." The whole universe is a protest against the selfish man, the selfish woman. The light-streaming sun, blessing the earth; the fragrant flowers giving forth odors in abundance; the gift-bearing seasons; the bowels of the earth yielding oil and coal—all these,

and many more things, speak against the selfish man. "God is against thee, O selfish heart. There may be great accumulation, may there not? Yes—yet not one moment of enjoyment of it all. There may be good standing at the bankers, may there not? Yes, and no foothold on any human heart. God has many ways of turning the selfish man's success to failure and disappointment." "Ye have sown much and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes." Let us know this—and have the excellency of being ashamed of selfishness.

Ought we not to possess the excellency of being ashamed of omission of duties? Ashamed of the things left undone? Yes. "To him who knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin!" Many of us are not getting to first base on a home run opportunity. Many "staring up the steps" but not "stepping up the stairs!" Many burying talents in napkins, long on excuses and short on work. Many loitering in the tents doing nothing, when the bugles of God call to battle. Ashamed!

Ought we not to be ashamed of the delinquency at the polls? When a political campaign is being waged and high principles are at stake, let us remember that a dissertation on "good citizenship" is fine in its place, but that good government comes by eternal vigilance, ceaseless agitation, and clean

votes. The Son of God goes forth to war, and not the least of the battles is the battle of ballots.

Dan Poling tells of what happened in Vermont once, during a campaign for State-wide prohibition. One man said "Prohibition will carry the State all right; and, if I wasn't so busy, I would like to vote myself!" In the election which followed, he and his kind defeated prohibition, for, with one hundred thousand eligible voters in the State, only fifty thousand went to the polls, and a majority of the delinquents were registered in territory already dry through local option.

And when Poling told this he said: "SHAME! Vermont of the Green Mountains! Vermont out of which Ethan Allen came to walk with the immortals! The descendants of men who tied rags about their frost-bitten, bleeding feet, and marched through blizzards to die for liberty, sat by their firesides on a day when the honor of their commonwealth and the future of her unborn were at stake, and, with the supreme weapon of citizenship in their hands and the gauge of civic battle thrown down, struck not a blow—and the battle went to the enemy, by default. Thrice shame upon those who sell their neighbor's birthright and their own for the pottage of civic laziness!"

Ashamed of lack of faith we ought to be! We come to obstacles, but we see our hindrances rather than our helps. We come to mountains steep and valleys dark—and falter, wondering if God is there.

We never test the resources of God until we attempt the impossible. Faith knows that.

Ashamed of lack of prayer we ought to be! What a loss immeasureable! Prayerless homes, prayerless churches! Prayerless statesmen!

Many things we could mention concerning which we should be blushingly ashamed. But we will say only this now. If we lose the power to blush over those who reserve the privilege of easy indifference, we are lifeless indeed. If we lose power to blush over and to speak out against the powers of evil making their dirty footprints and leaving their filthy fingermarks everywhere in high places and in low places and in all places, we are dumb indeed. If we have no quick impulse to blush over the wanton disregard of marriage vows and over the divorces granted because of "unadjustable incompatibilities" —we are dead indeed. If we have no power to blush at and to flare in anger at the delinquencies in public office and in private life, we are petrifiedly callous. If we have no crimson fires of shame burning in our cheeks when we think of those who advocate selfish individualism and aloof nationalism in the face of age-old antipathies and jealousies, we need a quickening indeed. If we feel not our cheeks burning in shame and our hearts starting with sudden revulsion, when we think of the things holding riotous carnival when and while a head-dizzy, heartsick, body-weary, soul-famished world

seeks help, we are indeed far down the stairs of "low satisfaction."

Ezra said at Ahava: "I was ashamed." How excellent the excellency of being ashamed!

V—THE EXCELLENCY OF VICTORY.

"Then we departed from the river of Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month! And the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way. And we came to Jerusalem! . . . Now on the fourth day was the silver and the gold and the vessels weighed in the house of our God . . . Also the children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity, offered burnt offerings unto God of Israel . . . And they furthered the people, and the house of God!" What a song of victory soundeth forth in these words! What a transcendent triumph of articulation these words contain! Every word of all these words peals forth as a great bell proclaiming liberty and victory. Like a tower full of chiming bells that ring out exile and ring in freedom, that ring out the "grief that saps the mind" and ring in a joy that is ever rich and abiding, do these words peal forth. Hark ye!

"The hand of our God was upon us!"
"He delivered us from the hand of the enemy!"
"He delivered us from such as lay in wait by the way!"

"And we came to Jerusalem!"
"The silver and gold and the vessels weighed!"
"The children of those that had been carried away
offered burnt offerings unto God!"
"And they furthered the house of God!"

The brilliance of ten thousand stars in those words! The shining of an everlasting sun in those words! The shout of those who have won a great victory in those words! The music of great organs in full tone and sweet chiming bells in tumultuous and triumphant unison in those words!

And in the presence of their message, further comment seems intrusion. But let us put this verse from the book of Job against your heart like the point of a sword and apply it to this message! And think of it in connection with the eighth chapter of Ezra: "Lo this, we have searched it, so it is; hear it, and know thou it for thy good" (Job 5:27).

IX

THE TREASURES OF THE SNOW

"Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?"—Job 38:22.

Seldom does one man become the target for so many arrow-sharp questions as we find in the thirty-eighth chapter of Job. God Almighty, as a mighty archer, with strong bow and quiver full of interrogatory arrows, shoots swiftly at his servant Job. However, no question of the 317 questions in the book of Job and no question of the thirty-nine questions in the beautiful chapter from which our text is chosen so laid hold upon my heart for this hour as the question: "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?" And at this hour when we see how the snow has choked our roads, covered our roofs, and clothed old mother earth, fold upon fold, in garments of bride-like whiteness, I pray that we may find spiritual blessing and profit in considering together the treasures of the snow.

The Bible teaches that "the God of glory thundereth" (Psa. 29:3), that in the heavens God "hath set a tabernacle for the sun which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race" (Psa. 19:5), that God "laid the

foundations of the earth" (Job 38:4), that God "directeth his lightning unto the ends of the earth" (Job 37:3), that God "commands the clouds" (Psa. 78:23), that God "hangeth the earth upon nothing" (Job 26:7), that God "cutteth out rivers among the rocks" (Job 28:10), that God "weigheth the waters by measure and the mountains in scales" (Job 28:25, and Isa. 40:12), that God "casteth forth his ice like morsels" (Psa. 147:17), that God "telleth grass to grow upon the mountains" (Psa. 147:8), that God "giveth snow like wool," that God says to the snow "Be thou upon the earth" (Psa. 147:16 and Job 37:6).

"I took a day to search for God, and found him not,
But when I trod by rock ledge through woods untamed,
Just where one scarlet lily flamed,
I saw His footprint in the sod.

"Then suddenly, all unaware,
Out in the purple twilight where
The solitary hermit thrush
Sang through the holy twilight hush,
I heard His voice upon the air.

"And as I wondered how
God gives us heaven here and now
In a gust of wind that hardly shook
The poplar leaves beside the brook,
I felt His hand upon my brow.

"And as homeward I turned
And thought of what I had learned,
And of all there is still to probe,
I caught the glory of His robe
Where the last fires of sunset burned!"

It is not my wish to be understood as approving Pantheism by quoting this beautifully phrased poem. We do not believe in Pantheism, or the doctrine that the world is God. We do not believe this false view of God any more than we believe in Naturalism, or the doctrine of salvation without life—any more than we believe in Sentimentalism, or the doctrine of salvation without blood—any more than we believe in Legalism, or the doctrine of salvation without faith—any more than we believe in Ecclesiasticism, or the doctrine of salvation by the church—any more than we believe in Judaism, or the doctrine of salvation by caste—any more than we believe in Universalism, or the doctrine of salvation without exception. But we have quoted these verses that we may more wisely enter into the "treasures of the snow," understanding and emphatically affirming that God's activity in the universe is highest and divinest in a dedicated human. And our burning desire as we consider the snow and its treasures this morning is that we may better "consider Him who endured" (Heb. 12:3)—that we may with deeper gratitude consider the blood of Christ Jesus which cleanseth us from all sin (I Jno. 1:7)—that we may have ears keenly sensitized to the voice of Him who sayeth "Come now let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isa. 1:18), who sayeth to the snow "Be thou on the earth."

I—THE MIGHT OF THE MUTIPLICITY OF MITES.

A snowflake is but a mite. All snowflakes are but mites. A baby's wee hand can hold in its dimpled palm hundreds of them. A slender twig can bear on its fragile bosom thousands of them. Slim blades of grass stand erect under the weight of myriads of them. Leaves, lightly attached to tiny twigs, are not broken under the pressure of many thousands of them. But why say I this? That we might get as a treasure from the snow a conception of the might of the multitude of mites. For these little feathery mites; these tiny fuzzy flakes; these delicate and immaculate little crystals, scarcely exceeding in weight, when individually considered, the bits of dust on the moth's wing; these flimsy, frail "feathers of the cloud geese," as light in themselves as strands of the spider's web, have Goliath-like strength and Samson-like power—because of the might of the multiplicity of mites working together. When these wee soldiers move out from their cloud tents and marshal their innumerable white battalions and march with silent, muffled tread across the face of the earth, they defeat the armies of men; they blockade and make impassable the roads of men; they bring to a standstill the mighty locomotives of men; they tie up the traffic systems of men; they set awry the travel plans of men; they, in avalanche formation, sweep from mountain sides the homes of men. What

might in the multiplicity of mites! What fury in these flimsy frail flakes!

"During a snow storm let an apothecary accustomed to weigh most delicate quantities, hold his weighing scales out of the window and let one flake fall on the surface of the scales and it will not even make it tremble. And yet the accumulation of these flakes once broke down, in sight of my house, telegraph poles, made helpless police and fire departments and halted railroad trains with two thundering locomotives. The snow puts its hand on many telegraph and telephone wires and tears them down as though they were cobwebs. The snow puts its finger on the lips of our cities that are talking to each other and they relapse into silence, uttering not a word. The snow is mightier than the lightning. In March, 1888, the snow stopped America. It said to New York, 'Stay at home,' to Richmond, 'Stay at home.' It put into a white sepulcher most of the nation. Commerce whose wheels never stopped before, stopped then. What was the matter? Power of accumulated snowflakes. Avalanches made up of single snowflakes. Snowslides of our own Northwest, many perishing by them every spring; snowslides on Alaskan glaciers, forever entombing the unfortunate gold-seekers; the melting snows flooding our great rivers till they overleap their banks and carry destruction and death through entire counties along the Mississippi, the Missouri, the Ohio, and the

Kansas. What a suggestion of accumulated power! And what a rebuke to all of us who get discouraged because we cannot do much and therefore do nothing; who will not be a snowflake because we cannot be an avalanche!"

Tiny atoms of steel welded together make the mighty pile-driving hammer! Frail fibers of thread woven together make the strong rope! Little drops of water, flowing in unison, make the thunderous Niagara and the on-sweeping river! Little railroad spikes, weighing but nine and one half ounces each, all working together and all holding together, enable the thunderous 300-ton engine to rush by and on and away at terrific speed! The rivulet, fed by little rills, a multitude of them from here and there and everywhere, goes increasingly on and becomes a river! So multitudes of God's people even though but "feeble folks like the cronies," individually considered and unitedly faithful, perform exploits of such magnitude as to prove forever false the assertion that the days of miracles and mighty achievements are past.

Ruskin said "Silk threads traveling with the velocity of light—approximately 186,000 miles per second—would be as strong as leather belting!" Just as certain, and more certain, would great things be wrought in this community and in far corners of the world by this church, if every David of our church, with his sling and pebbles, if every Dorcas of our church, with her needle and thread, if every

Miriam of our church, with her cymbal, if every Lydia of our church, with her "selling of purple," if every Ruth of our church, with her gleaning here and there, if every armor-bearer of our church, following faithfully and courageously the leadership of the leader, if every Shamgar of our church with his ox-goad, would unitedly "offer themselves willingly unto the Lord" (II Chron. 17:16) and with one accord "consecrate their services this day unto the Lord" (I Chron. 29:5). Many Goliaths of evil would we bring to earth, conquered fully! Many Agags of wickedness would we hew to pieces, sparing not till righteousness prevailed! Many stubborn Jerichos of selfishness would we encompass, seeing the wall thereof fall by united sacrifice! Many temples of Berith falsities wherein many take refuge would we overthrow to the salvation of many! Many swollen Jordans would we cross and gather inspiration to march on to greater triumphs for our God.

Have we entered into the treasures of the snow enough to see how and to know how to work together unitedly and without exception and without coercion and without conscription in a downright and outright and upright effort to crown Christ at the treasury? Have we learned enough of the accumulative power of "little peoples" to reach out to and to lay hold of the fulness of our possibilities? Have we entered into the treasures of the snow today with sufficient discernment to discover the

might of these multitudes of mites? Have we as yet seen and have we as yet acted the wisdom of being "knit together as one man" (Judges 20:11)? Have we known the power of being "knit together as one man"? When we have seen the wisdom and when we possess the power of such united endeavor we will carry tons where we have carried pounds; we will march in aggressive conquest miles where we have gone but rods; we will go forth "conquering and to conquer" where we have faltered and failed; we will gain victories certain and sure and lasting where we have had but fugitive triumphs; we will move on with the resistless sweep of a river at flood tide where we have babbled and chattered noisily as rills "blocked and stayed by the falling leaves"; we will "go over and possess the land" where we have halted at the gateway. Greater victories than we have ever hoped for; greater achievements than we have ever thought possible will be ours and His through us if—if—IF, we are, among ourselves and with Christ Jesus:

"One—like a musician's hand and his lyre,
One—like thought and speech,
One—like the nose and sweet odors,
One—like mother and babe,
One—like guide and misled wanderer,
One—like life and body,
One—like oil and the flame of the lamp,
One—like rain and the lake it fills,
One—like water and fish,
One—like sun and the day."

"Hast thou entered into the treasures of the

snow?" If you have, you will need, none of you, any additional urging to get you to heed the injunction of Paul who, in his letter to the Philippians, wrote: "Stand fast in one spirit with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel" (Phil. 1:27).

Consider:

II—THE EXCELLENCY OF EMPHASIS ON THINGS ESSENTIAL.

This is another precious jewel from the treasures of the snow—a jewel priceless and beautiful.

We are prone to live in the incidents rather than in the essentials, in the body rather than in the soul. We are prone to live in circumstances, "seeking shields to make us comfortable" rather than in character, "possessing shields to make us holy."

But what do we emphasize during these days when the snow king, riotously abundant and liberal, has "scattered deep his ashes white" all over our land? Well, fire is emphasized as essential to our comfort. The smoke from thousands of chimney tops writes that legibly across the face of the sky. The smell of burning wood and coal testifies to that in our nostrils. The flames on many hearthstones signal that truth by night from a thousand times a thousand windows, flaring red in the darkness. Furnaces aroar in many cellars and stoves all aheat in many rooms and radiators hotter than rocks baked by desert suns—all these are evidences that fire and

warmth and heat are emphasized as essentials during the visit of a snowstorm. Electric fans that buzz busily in summer days, in parlor and café and office, are silent now and inactive! Truthful witnesses they to the discard in winter of things not of the winter. Heavy clothes are emphasized as essential. Men in their overcoats, by their overcoats so testify. Little children buttoned in wraps, their hands in woolen gloves, by their wraps and gloves so testify. Women, fur-wrapped and fur-protected against the cold, teach without words the necessity of warm clothes in winter. In these days when our roof tops are snow-capped and our earth snow-wrapped, we see none in white slippers walking in the snow; we see none in palm beach suits walking the streets; we see no ladies carrying fans to social functions; we see none resting under shade trees or carrying umbrellas to protect them from the heat of the sun at noonday; we see none sporting in bathing suits on the white reaches of the beaches. Why? Because it is winter time—and people are emphasizing in dress and living quarters the emphatically essential things. In every place at every hour from everybody we get evidence of the emphasis put on things essential! How great this treasure found today and given us for our keeping among the treasures of the snow!

Now, many of us do not find ourselves guilty of idleness. We are often busy—maybe TOO busy—but tragically true it is that we are not always busy

about the things that matter most. Are not many young women strenuously busy today, but not about things that matter most, lacking the wisdom that puts first things first? Are not many young men busy these days, but busy giving emphasis to minor matters, busily cheating themselves with the sound instead of enriching themselves with the substance? Are not many other men and women, older in years and wiser in experience, slaves to the subordinate, slavishly toying with trivialities, mightily mastered by minor matters? We fear so.

Our age owns more than any preceding age. Why this dissatisfaction? Are we making things an end instead of a means? In handling the things that perish with the using are we perishing spiritually in using them? Have we not yet learned to yield ready obedience to the urging of the truth taught by Jesus when he said "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth"? The *Wall Street Journal* reached ears that have long been deaf or indifferent to the pulpit appeal when it said recently: "What we need today is not a more elastic currency, not better banking methods, not a more equitable tariff, not better protection against panics, not bigger navies and armies, but a revival of faith, a revival of the morality which recognizes a basis in religion." These words call our attention to emphasis on things that matter most.

Mr. Wolfe, a great business man of Dallas,

Texas, some months ago said, "The safety of everything and of everybody depends upon the right kind of religion. The safety of the family depends upon the church rather than upon the policeman. The solvency of the bank depends upon the preacher rather than the banker. What the steering wheel is to the automobile, what the railroad track is to the locomotive engine, what the foundation is to the building—that is the Christian religion to civilization." YES—and even more.

We need to emphasize the essential thing, putting our human deeds in gear with God's thoughts. We dare not, if we are in good bondage to spiritual objectives that thrill us, place the emphasis on the accumulation of material prosperity rather than upon persons and their regeneration and development. "The poorest, weakest child in all this seething mass of humanity is of more value in God's sight than every skyscraper, banking institution, art gallery and educational institution on the face of the globe!" This from the pen of a great writer is the sober truth—if the Incarnation be not a misnomer, if Calvary be not a make-believe, if the resurrection of Christ be not a delusion, if Olivet be not a masquerade, if Gethsemane be not a vaudeville act!

A question or so: Which do you, dear women, emphasize most today—social or church activities? Social functions or church matters. The gala days of the whirlpool or the sacrificial days of the

church's battle days? I believe in social activities and proper social functions modestly elaborate, but I do not believe in them nor do I give the least sanction to them when they are put ahead of the church services and when they are so arranged as to interfere with church activities.

When blind Bartimæus went toward Jesus he left his robe behind. This he did not because the robe was of no worth to him, but because he was emphasizing the matter that mattered supremely, his receiving his sight. When the woman of Sychar left Jesus at the sunset hour and went back to town she left her water pot. This she did not because she had no use for the water pot but because she was absorbed in things far more worth while than water pots! When Peter and John left their nets to follow Jesus they did so because they found no pleasure and profit in fishing but because they saw the duty that mattered most and trusted the promise that meant most. When Elisha left the plowshare it was not because plowing in the field was worthless but because following Elijah was the essential thing, the thing that measured more by God's rod and weighed more by God's scales.

Written across Calvary is sacrifice and service. But is that what we emphasize today? Or is it pleasure? Morrison said, "On the lips of Christ were the stern words 'I must die!' but on the lips of this age of ours are the light words 'I must enjoy!'" Does that mean the tragic thing we must

face on every hand—that we are busy but busy making life a playground? Busy but busy kindling fires of unworthy rest camps? Busy but busy chasing the short-lived butterflies of pleasure? Busy but busy dancing to the music of self indulgence? Busy but busy feeding the hungry maw of selfish ambitions?

Another question. What are people emphasizing most—outward appearance or inward rectitude? "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart." In His judgments of men Jesus passed by the clothes men wore, the houses they lived in, the reputation they prided themselves upon, and the menu of their tables. The men of Christ's day saw seldom through the eyes of Jesus. They were in bondage to the minutiæ of life! They were slaves to petty outwardness! They were rank externalists. They were on their knees before the goddess of reputation. They were blinded by the dazzle of sheer appearances, made to conform to insignificance. With them, even as with men today, they called men failures in proportion as they failed to measure up to external veneer! They saw not the tragedy of inward decadence.

Still other questions: Does not prayer need more emphasis today than we are giving it in our church life? "When we depend upon organization, we get what organization can do. When we depend upon education, we get what education can do; when we depend upon culture, we get what

culture can do; when we depend upon a mere financial scheme, we get what a mere financial scheme can do; but when we depend upon prayer, we get what God can do!" Prayer is a vital essential. It receives too little emphasis in our lives today.

Does not faith need greater emphasis? Surely. Yet we sometimes act as though Christ had broken every promise spoken. We sometimes venture as though we had already seen God's tombstone. We sometimes show our heels when we ought to laugh at the shaking of a spear. Little clouds of opposition no stronger and no larger than a man's hand see us shrinking like frightened children at the roar of a storm. We see our hindrances rather than our help. I wonder if God hath not written opposite our names in the Lamb's book of life "O ye of little faith." Many other things we might mention—which would be consuming time in enforcing the truth already mentioned and spoken of. But these we have mentioned that you may enter more reverently into "the holy-white sanctuary of the snow" and be satisfied and urged to possess in your daily living the excellency of emphasis on things essential.

Consider:

III—FOLKS FAR FROM FLAKES FAMILIAR.

Folks there are, thousands of them, who have never seen a snowflake. Millions there are who have never witnessed a snowstorm. Folks there

are, hundreds of thousands of them, who are strangers to the beauty of a snow-transfigured landscape. Thousands upon thousands who are "aliens to the commonwealth of the snow." In the land of the tropics God does not "give snow like wool." In the South Sea Islands God does not "scatter the hoarfrost like ashes." On "India's coral strand" he does not "cast forth his ice like morsels." By "Afric's sunny fountains" the footprints of the snow king are never seen. Amid the branches of Brazil's bamboo the hand of winter wasteth not. Where equatorial sands hatch the lizard's eggs the scepter of the snow monarch is never outstretched in authority. Thousands in lands remote have never seen the white kingdoms of the snow. That which is ours today in such abundance is theirs never. That which has come to us year by year has never come to them.

And I am thinking now that even as in tropic lands, even as in the islands of the tropic seas, even as in the jungles of distant corners, there are men who know not the snow—so there are millions who know not the Christ of God. There is a "mighty famine" in many lands and the messenger of God cometh late—if at all. There, remotely there, an awful darkness overshadows many. The terribly lost, the tragically lost, the pathetically lost, are legion. Millions there are in places where none of those who go by say, "The blessing of the Lord be upon you; we bless you in the name of the Lord!"

(Psa. 129:8.) Ten thousand times ten thousand there are "whose heart within them is desolate" (Psa. 143:4) in those lands where few "saints of God shout aloud with joy" (Psa. 132:16). Strangers they are to the marvelous grace of God, even as denizens of the deep are strangers to the snow-clad mountain peaks—even as the eagles of the crags are strangers to the coral parlors of the ocean's depths. They have never had the "dog's portion," crumbs from the Gospel table. They have never had one sip from the ever-full fountain of grace unsealed by him who said, "Come, and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely!" (Rev. 22:17). They have never plucked one flower from the great plots of God's imperishable Scripture gardens! They have never tasted one drop of honey from the full hive of God's truth. The old, old story, which is old news and new news and good news, so familiar to us and to our children, is now known to many—not known to millions! Far they are from flakes familiar. Far from the saving knowledge of God in Christ Jesus. Utter strangers to the grace that saves from all manner of sin.

Thousands and millions there are in Europe, bearing on their hearts a heavy burden! This burden will never be removed until, like Christian with the burden on his shoulders, they are brought to SEE and brought TO the Cross on the hill. Millions in

Japan there are in the grip of false philosophies, which hold far less perfume than the joss sticks, who are mighty forces in the service of the devil. Many in China who cry for bread and receive a stone. Many in Africa for whom Christ died who have never heard and do not know that the "High and Lofty One who inhabiteth eternity" "commendeth his love to them in that while they are sinners Christ died for them." Many there are in India, hungry and begging the crumbs that from our tables fall, whose mouths are "filled with gravel." And elsewhere—so many blind to the beauty of Christ, stumbling in the noonday as at the midnight. Millions there are deaf to the voice of Christ, staggering in the deceptions of false religions as drunken men in dizzy debauch. Many there are in soul pain who know not the great Physician nor where to find him if, perchance, they have ever heard of him. In the universe of God, far from these snowflakes so familiar to us, many dwell! In lands of idolatry and superstition millions blindly worship sticks and stones, knowing not Christ whom to know is life eternal. Struggling in dark gulfs of despair as they go down the starless stairways to the darker dungeons of everlasting night are multitudes "dead in trespasses and sins." Just as there are many today who have never seen the snow fall, so also there are many who know not Jesus Christ in the forgiveness of sins through faith.

Strangers they to Him who is the friend of sinners.
Strangers they in their hunger to Him who is the
Bread of Life!

Before the "burning bush" of this tragic truth I would have us, all of us, take the shoes from off our feet today and willingly let the tragedy of such press heavily with sharp insistence upon our hearts! And then, with hearts glowing with love fires that melt the lead in our feet, go forth with our feet "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Eph. 6:15) praying as we go—singing as we go, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things" (Rom. 10:15).

"Let things you have and need not
Serve those who need and have not."

Let the shadow of the Cross of Christ be on your pocketbook today. And every day!

"What if your own were straying,
Fainting with famine pain,
And you should know
Where golden grow
Rich fruit and ripened grain;
Would you hear the wail
As a thrice-told tale
And turn to your feast again?

"What if your own were thirsting
And never a drop could gain,
And you could tell
Where a sparkling well

Poured forth melodious rain;
Would you turn aside
While they gasped and died,
And leave them to their pain?

"What if your own were darkened,
Without one cheering ray,
And you alone
Could show where shone
The pure sweet light of day;
Would you leave them there
In their dark despair,
And sing on your sunlit way?

"What if your own were prisoned
Far in a hostile land,
And the only key
To set them free
Was held in your command;
Would you breathe free air
While they stifled there,
And wait and hold your hand?

"Yet what else are you doing,
Dear ones by Christ made free,
If you will not tell
What you know so well
To those across the sea,
Who have never heard
One tender word,
Of the Lamb of Calvary?"

Is it not time that some of our young men and young women were getting the matter of a sinning, sinful, sick, sunken and lost world on their hearts?

Is it not time that some of you, my dear young people, should give ear, you who have but one life to live, knowing as you do and as you are reminded this morning hour, that your ears should be keenly sensitized to God's voice when he speaketh, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Hasn't the hour arrived for you, knowing as you do and as you are solemnly reminded now, that yonder in many lands the messenger of God cometh late or cometh never, to say to God "Here am I—send me"? The creator needs those born again to tell others of the new birth. The divine needs the human to be channels through which the divine shall become articulate. The steam needs its cylinder, the river its current, the electric force its wire. Do you hear between my words a voice wiser than my words? Say then: "Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth!"

Think also of:

IV—THE GRACE OF GOD THAT GLORIFIES.

The tongueless snow speaks into mine ears today of the grace of God that glorifies. The snow coming without asking and in such abundance is an eloquent speaker today of "the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, that hath abounded unto many" (Rom. 5:15). According to the New Testament record the grace of God is the unmerited and unlimited favor of God to the utterly undeserving. It is the

immeasurable, undeserved favor and mercy of God to those vile and full of guilt. Grace, from the human position, the position of the recipient, is receiving, aboundingly receiving, just the opposite to what we deserve.

And today the white snow covering the earth with such beauty and such abundance is, to me, a prairie-wide, mountain-high, river-long, chasm-deep, sun-warm message, the heart of which is Romans five and twenty, "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound." It makes to echo in our hearts what David spoke out of the depths of a great recovery, "Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." It brings as vividly before me as blood on white marble the words of Isaiah, "Though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool."

The snow covers the black housetops with white counterpanes of exceedingly excellent embroidery. The snow makes the unsightly garbage cans to wear coronets whiter than hawthorn blossoms and as bright as the sunlight. The snow makes the grimy blacksmith's shop to look like the white porches of a king's palace. The snow makes the sodden ash heap and the trash pile to gleam like burnished shields in resplendent polish. The snow makes the thorny cactus hedge to look like dignified judges in robes of ermine, velvety soft and resplendently white. The snow, with none of the gaudy artificiality of the beauty parlor, makes the barren lilac bushes to appear as groups of fair ladies whose

white bosoms glow with pearls and opals and whose fingers sparkle with diamonds as bright as miniature suns. The snow puts its hand on the foot-trampled alley and the wheel cut road and causes them to look like the white carpet reaching in slender lengths toward the wedding altar for the white slippered feet of the fair girl bride. The snow makes even the bramble clusters to look as lattices festooned with white lilies and white roses. The snow makes the dreary hill peaks beyond the desolate marshes to shine like minarets of alabaster in the gleam of a red morning sun. The snow, like a dressmaker of the queen, adorns the smutty chimney rims with robes of regal white and "diadems of snow." The snow, with no boast of its beauty, puts white raiment on the stable gables and garbs with garments of gorgeous white the gutter foul and filthy. The snow, with generous graciousness, hides the grimy muck of the mudhole. The snow, as a pure dove with eagle wings, drives away the raven of uncleanness, transforms the unsightly into the beautiful, the ghastly into the gorgeous, the gruesome into the glimmeringly lovely. And in doing all this the snow reaches far and wide.

And today the snow as it reaches far and wide teaches far and wide of God's wondrous grace which cleanses black hearts, making them white as snow, which clothes with the white raiment of Christ's righteousness the distorted, deformed, shamefully naked, loathsomely diseased, sin-scarred, sin-

blighted, sin-saddened, sin-broken, sin-ruined, sin-blasted, sin-doomed, sin-damned lives of men and women.

We must bear in mind, however, never a moment forgetting, that the snow works its transformations from the outside by outside covering; but the grace of God that bringeth salvation" (Titus 2:11) and glorifies in praise Him who bestows it and glorifies in blessed renewal him who receives it, works its transformations and glorifications from the inside by inside cleansing and inside renewal—by bringing about the new-born heart.

Today, in contrast with the whiteness of the snow itself, and in contrast with the grace of God which it symbolizes, is the blackness of sin, the blackness of dark deeds, the blackness of filthy thoughts conceived, the blackness of foul and profane words spewed out like the vomitings of a miniature volcano.

In strongest contrast to the grace of God concerning which snow speaketh in symbol is black drunkenness, foul-mouthed and brain-addled—black adultery, fattening on the beauty of virgins and making marriage vows perpetual perjury—black falsehood, vomiting poisonous saliva, the muddy lees of besmirched hearts—black murder, dehumanized by hate and hope of illegal gain, walking with dirty and dripping hands among us—black dishonesty, dirty and despicable, "converting into money the patience of the poor and establishing friendship with

cheating scullions"—black sham and hypocrisy, "stealing the livery of heaven to serve the devil in"—black deceit, smiling and smirky, possessing that "shallow stream of piety that runs on Sabbath days a fresher course"—whited sepulchers of iniquity, outwardly beautiful but inwardly black and full of all uncleanness. How full of pathos! How tragic the contrast between the pureness of the snow and the putrid outpourings of human hearts!

Somewhere somebody has written these vivid words: "God paints in many colors, but he never paints so gorgeously as when he paints in white." This sentence I would have you recall and its truth I would have you meditate upon and enlarge upon just now. To know how God paints—witness the red of the sunset! Witness the yellow of the fields of golden red! Witness the blue of the sky prairie! Witness the emerald of the ocean's wave! Witness the green of the forest of cedars and fir! Witness the purple of the lilac! Witness the pink of the peach orchards! Witness the garnet of the autumn foliage! Witness the black of the raven's wing! Witness the gold of the stars! Witness the crimson of the rose! Witness the scarlet of the poppy!—all these are so exquisite, so perfectly beautiful indeed! But when God paints everywhere and everything white with the clouds as his brush and the snow as his paint and the earth as his canvas, surely a great masterpiece is spread out on the earth. But to see the most beautiful work of the Infinite

Artist you must turn from God's painting in the realms of nature to behold his cleansing in the realms of human depravity and human short-coming and human sinfulness and human sinning.

Behold Bunyan, the dissolute tinker, made so white by the crimson tides from the wounded Son of God! Behold Jerry Macauley, the Bowery criminal, cleansed and made whitely pure by the blood of the Lamb. Behold Mel Trotter, walking in the mud and sleeping in the muck and feasting on the carrion of sin, made white by the blood that stained Calvary's hill. Behold Saul of Tarsus, the tiger of the Jewish Sanhedrin, powerful in persecution and eloquent in execration of the Christian people, with his sins as scarlet made as white as snow! Behold Zacchæus who became a new creature in Christ Jesus! And Zacchæus became a new husband to his wife, a new father to his children, a new citizen to the community, a new neighbor to his neighbors—a trophy of redeeming grace. Behold John Newton, a drunken sailor, foul in speech and impure in soul; Jesus washed him white in his blood—and John Newton became the celebrated theologian and preacher. Behold George Whitefield, a barkeeper in Gloucester! The blood of Jesus Christ cleansed him from all sin—and he became a marvelous preacher of untiring energy and flaming zeal. Behold that sunken woman at Jacob's well! Knowing and surrendering to Jesus she came to possess the health that no sickness can take away,

the health of the "Son of Righteousness with healing in his wings." So vile she was you would not want to live next door to her; yet through the miracle of saving grace which the snow speaks of today by the transformation it shows forth, she became the first evangelist of the New Testament, and "many believed on Jesus because of the word of the woman." (Jno. 4:39). The lives of these, and the lives of thousands upon thousands of others, testify to the fact that "where sin abounded grace did much more abound." Their lives, from the hour they first believed, testify that all of these "went out with joy and were led forth with peace, that the mountains and hills did break forth into singing and all the trees of the field clapped their hands."

Their work, as God sent them forth wondrously saved, hath "praised them in the gates," testifying of him who "redeems the souls of men from destruction!" They knew, even as others knew and know, that Christ Jesus is the only Door, but that he is the Door through whom any man, Jew or Greek, Roman or Egyptian, slave or master, can come by faith into the very presence of God!

And when we know that surpassing the beauty of the Infinite Artist in the realms of nature is the cleansing of the blood of the compassionate Son of God in the realms of the sinning soul, we all would sing:

"O precious is the flow
That makes me white as snow.
No other fount I know—
Nothing but the blood of Jesus!"

And when we know that God takes RED, even the red blood of Jesus, and takes away the deepest black, even the hideous filth of sin's black slime, and makes white, even whiter than the snow, the sin-smirched hearts and sin-scarred souls of men and women, we feel urged to say in mighty chorus of confirmation:

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away!"

V—PURITY OF PLACE PREPARED.

Jesus says, "I go to prepare a place for you." John speaks in Rev. 21:21 and 27 of the perpetual purity of the place prepared: "There shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean." And today the snow, so utterly clean, makes us think of that clean city where clean streets are walked by men of clean hands and pure hearts.

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord—and who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not sworn deceitfully nor lifted up his soul unto vanity." The snow preaches to me from the hilltop and its pulpit of roof top and its pulpit of the chim-

ney tops and its pulpit of the meadow lands of the white city of ivory palaces from which the Christ came—that city into which he went after he had "humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross"—that city which we, washed white in the blood of the Lamb, shall enter when we walk no more this pilgrim way.

Looking from my window yesterday morning and this morning, while the earth received the white outpouring of the clouds, I thought of him "in the midst of the seven candlesticks, one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle—his head and his hairs white like wool, as white as snow!"

When I saw the snow rise like miniature pyramids on the stones on the lawn near my window, I found myself repeating Rev. 2:17: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."

As I saw this morning an old man, his head white with the snow of the years, his beard rivaling in whiteness the snow, making his way laboriously across the snow-barricaded road to God's house, I found myself saying: "He that overcometh the same shall be clothed in white raiment and I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels."

And as I saw the snowflakes pelting against the white columns of the front porch and falling together in a whiter heap at the base I said aloud, with great joy in my heart: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out" (Rev. 3:12).

Moreover, I thought of the promise which cannot be broken: "And they shall walk with me in white for they are worthy" (Rev. 3:4).

And from my upstairs window as I looked out upon the snow-crowned hills I repeated what John wrote under inspiration: "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21:2).

And I thought then, as I think now, of a "great white throne, and him that sat thereon from whom the earth and the heaven fled away" (Rev. 20:11).

And there came to me with repeated insistence the glorious forward-pointing promise of Rev. 3:21: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne!" And I thought, even as I would have you think of "the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held" (Rev. 6:9) and of the "White robes which were given unto every one of them."

And I asked within myself the question which the

elder asked and himself answered, when John beheld "the great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes," saying, "What are these arrayed in white robes, and whence came they?" (Rev. 7:9, 13-14).

And I thought of the pure river from under that white throne with not one drop of the rivers of earth to soil it and "no tears of human sorrow to embitter it and no soil of earth to stain it."

And I thought of how, one of God's days, "on the margin of the river washing up its silver spray, we shall walk and worship ever all the happy golden day!" And I thought of all the gates of "the city which are twelve pearls: three gates on the North, three gates on the South, three gates on the East, three gates on the West" (Rev. 21:12, 27). And I would have you think now of the time when, rejoicing that our sins were long ago washed white in the blood of the Lamb, we shall pass through the gates to the city where

"Every house is a palace,
Every step is a triumph,
Every covering of the head is a coronation,
Every meal is a banquet,
Every stroke from the tower is a wedding bell,
Every day is a jubilee,
Every hour is a rapture,
Every moment is an ecstasy."

"Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?" Have we seen in the snow-clothed world, with its bridelike whiteness, a symbolic gleam of that pearly white city whose maker and builder is God? If so, the joys of this day will not end with the day. Have we understood that He who saith to the snow "Be thou on the earth" said to the leper "Be thou clean" and to the sinful woman "Go and sin no more"? If so, surely we will humbly and confessedly pray:

"Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation; and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness" (Psa. 51:7-14).

X

WORTHLESS PURSUITS

"After whom is the king of Israel come out? After whom dost thou pursue? After a dead dog, after a flea!" —1. Samuel 24: 14.

We have said in your hearing before that the Bible is a Book beyond and above all books as a river is beyond a rill in reach, as the sun is beyond a tallow dip in brightness, as the wings of an eagle are beyond the wings of a sparrow in strength, as a tree is beyond a twig in fruit bearing.

Now just one unique flower from this vast garden of God's inspired Word have I selected for our scrutiny today. Just one obscure corner in this wide continent of God's revelation have I chosen upon which to pitch our mental tents at this hour. Just one overlooked star in the full sky of the Scriptural world would I have you focus your intellectual telescopes upon for a brief period. Just one unappreciated gem from the vast storehouse of our God's treasures have I brought forth for the center of our hearts' meditations. Just one scene from the Old Testament life of David would I have you consider now.

This: "After whom is the king of Israel come out? After whom dost thou pursue? After a dead dog, after a flea!"

And considering how this verse, rich in Oriental imagery, reveals a king choosing the rôle of a fool, its every word staggers under a weight of agony.

Because Saul hated David he said: "I will smite David even to the wall," "Let the hand of the Philistines be upon him." And "he spake to Jonathan his son and to all his servants that they should kill David."

Now "Saul became David's enemy continually." And, driven by this fury of hatred, Saul was "searching throughout all the thousands of Judah" for David, determined to end his life. And "Saul came to the sheepcotes by the way where was a cave . . . and Saul went in to cover his feet . . . and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave. . . . Then David arose and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe secretly . . . and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave and went on his way. . . . David also rose afterwards and went out of the cave and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. . . . See the skirt of thy robe in my hand . . . for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it. . . . After whom is

the king of Israel come out? After whom dost thou pursue? After a dead dog, after a flea!"

Think of it! A king who was a choice young man! A king who stood head and shoulders above any man in Israel! A king who was kingly in appearance! A king who had a great friend in Samuel, the prophet! A king who wore the garments of royalty! A king who had a crown, a scepter, a throne! A king who had an army at his command. Doing what? Chasing a flea. A ludicrously grotesque comedy, all tragedy!

A king prostituting great authority to ignoble ends, wasting great energies in cheap trivialities, despising great opportunities with sinful scorn! A king dishonoring himself with cheap littleness—an eagle coming down to titmouse dimensions, "contracting his firmament to the compass of a tent." A king shooting cannon at sparrows, charging ant hills with drawn swords, fishing for minnows with an anchor-hook, lassoing tabby cats with cart ropes, seeking to capture a flea!

And Saul is a type of any and all who use their mental endowments, their physical energies, their educational advantages, their spiritual privileges, in seeking those things that matter little—in following the paths that lead eventually and inevitably to the land of nobodyism. A type he of all who change heavenly principles for loose expediences, high ideals for cheap compromises, who are slaves to small anxieties, small ideas, small ambitions—who

are daily missing life's central melodies because they are victims of dawdling ditties.

Flea chasers they who make

I—PLEASURE THE CHIEF AIM IN LIFE.

You young men face youth. You are in the springtime of life. The best years are yet before you. You are at the age when choice can be most easily made and most easily adhered to. You are at the age when the right choice will bring to you and the world the largest results. AND in these morning hours of life, "world voices east, world voices west," world voices from everywhere, will call to you to make pleasure the chief aim, the prime motive, of life.

Voices there will be saying persistently, saying insistently: "Get satisfaction out of life"—never urging you to put meaning, service, sacrifice into life, but ever urging you to make life more of a scheme, an artifice, a trickery, and less of an exalted crusade —never telling you that those who make pleasure the purpose of life are losing themselves in the chaff and rubbish heaps of life.

Voices there are that subtly urge deafness to Bulwer who says: "The life of pleasure makes even the strongest mind frivolous."

Voices there are that would entreat you to rush blindly by the warning Shenstone holds out in these words: "What leads to unhappiness is making pleasure the chief aim."

Voices there are shouting from the housetop that Parker is wrong who says "A life merely of pleasure, or chiefly of pleasure, is always a poor and worthless life—always unsatisfactory in its course, always miserable in its end."

Voices there are whispering in the closet that Beecher blundered when he said: "Mere pleasure, sought outside of usefulness, is fraught with poison."

Forces there are that would puncture our ear drums and have us deaf when Balzac speaks who declares: "In diving to the bottom of pleasure we bring up more gravel than pearls."

Voices there are that spread abroad their denials of the truth uttered by him who says; "Pleasure seekers are like those letting empty buckets down into empty wells and growing weary with drawing nothing up!"

Voices there are that dare shout "Thou liest" when Paul, servant of the Most High, saith: "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."

Choruses of voices there are crying aloud their scorn when one writes: "Whoever gives herself up to the pleasure of the world, whether she be a bedraggled sinner by the well curb, or a queen upon the throne; whether she be a Cleopatra toying with crowns and kings and kingdoms, or an oppressed slave, the plaything of her captors; whether she be a woman with the intellectual charm and vivacity of a Lady Hamilton, or with the literary genius of a George Eliot; whether she possess the statesmanship

of a proud Elizabeth, or the appealing poetical powers of a Mrs. Browning, or whoever she is, in whatever circle she may move—if she lives in pleasure she is dead while she lives.

"She may be the most handsomely gowned woman, but her gorgeous dresses are nothing more than a shroud. She may move gracefully to the finest festive music, but her dancing is the dance of death. She may have a most beautiful body, but it is only the gilded casket for a dead heart. Her face may be classical in its charm, but it is only artistically carved glass through which God looks in upon a pallid, lifeless life. She may be a queen in society, but she is dead. The Bible says so! And in the spiritual autopsy Jesus discovers the disease with which she died. She died of pleasure, of worldly pleasure, the laughter of the world choking her, much worldly rejoicing overcoming her—strangled with a prolonged draught of siren song."

And what hath been said of the woman who liveth in pleasure is true of the man who liveth in pleasure, of all men everywhere who make the obtaining of pleasure the one outstanding aim of life. When purpose in life is to have a good time at any cost, paralysis of the heart and palsy of the soul are inevitable. "To be carnally minded is death." Many, harnessed to the treadmill of the trivial, dancing to the music of self-indulgence, chasing the short-lived butterflies of pleasure, need to learn and remember that

"Pleasures are as poppies spread;
You seize the flower, the bloom is shed.
Or like the snowflake on the river,
A moment seen, then gone forever.
Or like the borealis rays
That flit ere you can point the place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Vanishing amid the storm."

"And the tragedy of a life that makes pleasure chief is that it is unconscious of the great spiritual realities. You move among sublimities and never see them; you play marbles with diamonds and never suspect their value, you stumble among the glories of the seven golden candlesticks and think no more of them than of common wax candles. Your own soul is an undiscovered jewel. You have no more use for it than a hog for an angel's plume. Infinite spiritual beauties spread all around us, but we are blind to them as bats to light."

Mrs. Wilcox, in "The Squanderer," pictures what David meant when he said to King Saul: "After whom dost thou pursue? After a flea." She has shown that those who make pleasure the chief aim of life will come surely to that which, in the market of eternal values, in the light of life's sunset, in the scales of Heaven, and by the scrolls whereon are written the names of the greatly noble, and the nobly great, is as valuable as a valueless dead dog, possessing only as much merit and worth as a worthless flea uncaught, or caught! This:

"God gave him passions splendid as the sun,
Meant for the lordliest purposes; a part
Of Nature's full and fertile mother heart,
From which new systems and new worlds are spun,
And now—behold what he hath done!
In Folly's Court and Carnal Pleasure's mart,
He flung the wealth God gave him at the start;
This of all mortal sins the deadliest one.
At dawn he stood potential, opulent,
With virile manhood and emotions keen,
And wonderful with God's creative fire.
At noon he stands all Life's large fortune spent
In petty traffic, unproductive, mean,
A pauper cursed with impotent desire."

After what wilt thou pursue? After pleasure? After a good time? Then thou art on a flea chase. Your reward will be a carcass, not a crown.

So also, presenting the comic and tragic picture of him who goeth out, "being armed and carrying bows," after a flea, are they who seek

II—EASE IN LIFE.

It seems to be a law of the universe that nothing really good can be gotten or held by soft, easy means. You cannot dream yourself into character; you must hammer and forge yourself into character. "Who are these arrayed in white? They who came up out of great tribulation and have overcome the beast."

But now that you have finished, some of you, your college course, oft with bold subtlety the tempter's mouth will approach your ear, saying "Soul, take thine ease." And if you listen and obey,

you are giving yourselves to the pursuit of a flea, which, whether caught or uncaught, is worthless.

What has been the result when nations have yielded to ease after attainments? Surveying the most glorious states of antiquity, we have seen a civilization which in many respects rivals all that modern nations have to show. In art, in literature, in philosophy, in laws, in the mechanism of governments, in the cultivated face of nature, in military strength, in many things and in most things, they attained great strength. But their glory was succeeded by shame, their virtue by vice, their strength by weakness. And Gibbons gives the secret: "No people abandoned themselves to pleasure and ease more universally than the Romans after their combats of war. They compare their sailings on the lake to the marches of Alexander and Caesar; yet should a fly presume to light on the silken folds of their umbrellas, should a sunbeam penetrate through some unguarded chink, they deplore their intolerable hardships." And nations are but aggregations of individuals.

How great is the danger and how great is the disgrace of abandoning one's self to a life of ease in the face of the world's wanderings, wonderings, and wickedness—in the face of the innumerable woes that come tramping in from many lands, in the face of the chasms across which men glare at each other in suspicion and ill will, in the face of a head-dizzy, body-weary, heart-hungry, soul-sick

world, in the face of multitudes untaught and mistaught, multitudes unled and misled.

You desire success. But, let me ask, what is success? Not a measure of comparison with what other men and women have done—not at all. Success is coming up to the level of our best, making the most of our abilities and possibilities. When Nelson signalled from his flagship, "England expects every man to do his duty" it did not mean the same to all. To the captains it meant that they should do their best as commanders; to the marines it meant that they should do their best at the guns; to the sailors that they should do their best in sailing the ships; to the cabin boys that they should do their best as messengers. Every one succeeded who did the best he could." Whoever spoke these sentences uttered words worthy the ears of all generations.

But no man can be a success anywhere at anything who makes ease the aim of his life. George MacDonald says: "No amount of wealth can set one free from the obligation to work in a world the God of which is ever working." Jesus says: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Solomon says: "Whatsoever thy hands find to do, do it with all thy might."

"WORK!
Thank God for the might of it!
The ardor, the urge, the delight of it;
Work that springs from the heart's desire,
Setting the brain and soul on fire—

O, what is so good as the heat of it,
And what is so glad as the beat of it,
And what is so kind as the stern command,
Challenging brain and heart and hand?

"WORK!
The power that drives behind,
Guiding the purpose, taming the mind,
Reining the runaway wishes back,
Holding the will to one steady track.
Speeding the energies, faster, faster,
Triumphing over disaster.
O, what is so good as the pain of it,
And what is so great as the gain of it?
And what is so kind as the cruel goad
Forcing us on through the rugged road?"

Young men, work. Despise ease. Set a high goal and go to that goal over any rough road, no matter how rough—up any high hill, no matter how high—through any dark valley, no matter how dark.

We are told that at fifty-five years of age, Sir Walter Scott owed more than six hundred thousand dollars. He determined that every dollar should be paid. This definite resolution gave confidence and inspiration to every faculty he possessed. Every nerve and fiber seemed to say "The debt must be paid." Every drop of blood caught the inspiration and rushed to the brain to add its weight of force to the power that wielded the pen. AND the debt was paid. In his diary he wrote: "I have suffered terribly and often wished that I could lie

down and sleep without waking, but I will fight it out." He did. Following that worthy aim, he made his name immortal.

In the light of such high endeavor and achievement, in the knowledge of Christ who "gave his back to the smiters and his cheeks to them that plucked out his beard and hid not his face from shame and spitting," God keep you young men from a slothful timidity in daring, from a passive acquiescence in small attainments, from a careless indifference to the great stretches of the unattained, from a cheap lethargy in the face of unscaled peaks that await the pilgrim feet of spiritual pioneers.

Carlyle was not far from a great kingdom of truth when he said: "He who has battled with poverty and hard toil will be found stronger and more expert than he who would stay at home from the battle, concealed among the provision wagons, or watchfully abiding by the stuff."

To live so as to be a stinging rebuke to apathy, accelerating the triumphant progress of all noble enterprises, is no easy task. The race is not to be run in short heats amid the plaudits of spectators. It is an endurance test which lasts as long as life itself lasts and whose hardest stretches are run without applause, amid misunderstanding, abuse, discouragement. But remember you cannot be honorable before God; "in the world's broad field of battle" you cannot be a "hero in the strife" by being pretty poll parrots, to amuse; human Skye terriers,

to be fondled; or human poodles, to be merely fed, grow sleek, and wear ribbons.

"Forbid for me, O God,
An easy place in some sequestered nook,
Apart to lie!
To doze and dream and weaker grow,
Until I die!

"Give me, O Lord, a task so hard
That all my powers shall taxed be
To do my best!
That I may stronger grow in toil
For harder service fitted be
Until I rest.

"This is my reward—development
From what I am to what thou art.
For this I plead.
Wrought out by being wrought upon,
By deeds reflexive, done in love,
For those in need!"

Moreover, in pursuit of a flea also are they who have as an objective the winning of

III—FAME AND WORLDLY PRAISE.

Many today, sickly victims of advertisement, diseased with the notion that only publicly touted folks are interesting, are running around looking for fool's gold. Ridiculously conspicuous among these are they who are play actors striving for the applause of the world. A man enlists with the

stupid and reveals himself as sordid whose ambition for applause and publicity is supreme—and in the fierceness of this desire he draws every minor yearning to the central purpose like tributaries converging upon the main stream. Merely to seek and to secure the indiscriminating adulations of a world which is "a combination of stupid prejudices, ignorant enthusiasms and vicious customs, together with a vast deal of submerged human goodness" is poor purpose for any life. Foolishly foolish, as men who burn lamps in the outdoor world at noonday, are they who become fame seekers and advertisement hunters and prefer the plaudits of the fickle populace or the praise of men no greater than many obscure ones, to the knowledge that they are well-pleasing to God Almighty whose scales weigh not as men's scales.

Call the roll of the famous. What say they? Their answers verify our statements. Hark ye!

Burke says: "I wouldn't give a peck of refuse wheat for all the fame of the world."

Charles Lamb, for whom the world stamped its feet and clapped its hands: "I walk up and down thinking I am happy and knowing I am not."

Samuel Johnson, whose mighty intellect brought him praise aplenty: "I am afraid I will some day go crazy."

Hazlitt, far-reachingly famous essayist: "I have a volcano in my breast."

Smollett, whose pen brought him much money

and much publicity: "I am sick of praise and blame."

Webster, whose name was a household word: "Suppose your candidate for fame pursues unremittingly the object of his love, through every difficulty and over every obstacle, till at last he overtakes her ladyship, and is permitted to kiss the hem of her garment on Mount Immortality, what will the dear-bought damsel boot him? If he taste of her lip there is no nectar in it. Every rascal who has been bold and fearless enough, Nimrod, Catiline, Nero, Tom Paine, all have had a smack at her before him."

Dante, author famous: "Worldly fame is but a wind that blows now this way and now that, and changes name as it changes direction."

The plaintive utterances of many, many others who found fame an empty thing, a sordid objective, might be quoted. Fame and public applause are often fickle—and the bouquets the public sometimes throws are followed by brickbats.

Today many, seeking fame, are flushed with excitement. Many, feeding and fattening on morsels of praise, are intoxicated with exorbitant self valuation. Some, coveting worldly honor above all things, are blinded by the pride of life. Some, seeking elevation on pedestals of the world's applause, frantically cry "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." Yet the days will come when they will think very little of Diana. Having served fame and

found it an empty thing, having served pleasure and found it an apple full of ashes, having served appetite and found it a wormy morsel, having served pride and found it in the end a thorny bed and a pillow of stones, having served Mammon and found it a "broken arc" instead of a "perfect round," they will acknowledge that they have been betrayed, mocked, wounded, disappointed—and that miserably. "Then they will look sympathetically and longingly to the religious life so sadly neglected." The lament of Wolsey, "Had I served my God as I have served my king he would not have left me naked in my grey hairs," is so vividly remembered and is so often on the lips of men because, as Watkinson wisely avers, it expresses such a deep and general experience, because in one form or another it is the bitter confession of millions of cheated and disenchanted men and women. No man, no woman, can afford the feast today that brings tomorrow's fast. None of us can afford the comedy that ends in tragedy. No one can afford the gain today that brings tomorrow's loss! No man can afford to miss the crown by refusing or failing to take up his cross.

Robert Browning in "The Patriot" not only rebukes the fickleness of public acclaim but shows the foolishness of those who make the winning of fame the chiefest objective of life. And if "a word to the wise is sufficient," surely to quote "The Patriot" is quite sufficient here:

"It was roses, roses, all the way,
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad;
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
A year ago on this very day.

"The air broke into a mist with bells,
The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries.
Had I said, 'Good folk, mere noise repels—
But give me your sun from yonder skies!'
They had answered, 'And afterward, what else?'

"Alack, it is I who leaped at the sun,
To give it my loving friends to keep!
Naught man could do, have I left undone:
And you see my harvest, what I reap
This very day, now a year is run.

"There's nobody on the housetops now—
Just a palsied few at the windows set;
For the best of the sight is, all allow,
At the Shambles Gate—or, better yet,
By the very scaffold's foot, I trow.

"I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
A rope cuts both my wrists behind;
And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
For they fling, whoever has a mind,
Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

"Thus I entered, and thus I go!
In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.
'Paid by the world, what dost thou owe
Me?'—God might question; now, instead,
'Tis God shall repay: I am safer so."

"After whom dost thou pursue? After a dead dog, after a flea!"

Seeking a carcass rather than a crown, spending life in pursuit of flea values are they who

IV—FOLLOW AFTER SIN.

False, abominably false, is the literary and æsthetic conception of sin which says that sin is a mere disagreeable hindrance to the smooth on-going of the social machinery. False, false as hell is false, is the scientific conception of sin which says that sin is an upward stumble in man's progress. False, diabolically false, is the physiological conception of sin which declares that sin is active and hurtful only in the hereditary channel. False, false as the kiss of Judas on the Master's cheek, is the assertion that sin is a nightmare caused by too much appetite and too little digestion.

It was no nightmare that made David say "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight. . . . Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities." It was no nightmare caused by too much appetite and too little digestion that made Judas throw down the pieces of silver and go hang himself. It was no nightmare caused by too much appetite and too little digestion that made Lady Macbeth say "All the perfumes of Arabia would not sweeten this little hand." Sin is deceit, disorder, devastation, death, in any place and in all places on earth. Sin is no

respecter of persons. All ages have known, and do know, the killing frosts of its blight. It is manifest outwardly in poverty, in pain, in bodily defacement. It is manifest inwardly in the discrowned faculties, in the unworthy love, in the low satisfactions of low ideals, in the brutalized and enslaved spirit.

We need only to compare the promises and payments of sin to understand its falsehood, its deceit, its malicious undoing.

"Black sin lures with opaline lights
And sings us to confident sleep;
And then, in the horror of nights,
It strangles men's cry in the deep.

"It promises us substance and store
If we will give it our sons and our fleet.
And then, having cozened us sore,
It casts up our dead at our feet.

"It promises us good wind for our sail
And purrs at our feet on the sand,
And then, in the midst of the gale,
It sweeps us far from shelt'ring land."

No wonder Dr. Talmadge said: "Sin may open bright as the morning, but it will end dark as the night!" Wise was Dr. MacLaren when he said: "The epitaph for the sinner is 'Thou fool'!" Consider sin's promises and its payments and—be wise!

Sin is a Goliath of power. Sin is a wild Absalom

of rebellion. Sin is a sullen Macbeth of villainy. Sin is a greedy Midas of avarice. Sin is an audaciously loathsome Judas of treachery. Sin is a thieving Sapphira of falsehood. Sin is a cruel Ahab of covetousness. Sin is a destructive Cleopatra of lust. Sin is a bold Belshazzar of irreverence. Sin is a bloody Jael of slaughter. Sin is a merciless Nero of evil. Sin is an intolerably haughty Nebuchadnezzar of pride. Sin is a painted Jezebel of murder. Sin is an ambitious Athaliah of usurpation. And all these in one. Ten thousand homes it has robbed. Ten thousand times ten thousand family ties, sweet as honey and the honeycomb, it has broken. Many nations it has cast upon the tragic ruins of history. "It is more tenacious than the thongs of the devilfish. It is a bloodhound of perdition that never loses a trail." Like the wine cup, sin first sparkles and glows, but "at last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder." Like Mokanna, the prophet of the silver veil, enticing his victim with silver veil and palace pleasures, it seems like some angel

"Sent to free the world from every bond and stain
And bring its primal glories back again."

But when the silver veil is torn away and its hideous features and more horrid heart are revealed, it may well say with the veiled prophet to Zelica,

"Here, judge if hell, with all its power to damn,
Can add one curse to the foul thing I am."

Tarpeia, the Roman chief's daughter who betrayed the city for the promise of what was on the arms of the soldiers, meaning their gold bracelets, was paid by being crushed to death by the heavy shields, which were also upon the soldiers' arms. Thus sin promises. Thus falsely and destructively sin pays.

A singular tree there is which bears the name of *Judas tree*. Brilliantly crimson are the blossoms, and their beauty and fragrance attract innumerable insects—and the wandering bee is drawn to them to gather honey. But every bee that lights upon the blossoms imbibes a fatal opiate, and drops dead from among the crimson flowers to the earth. Beneath this enticing tree the ground is strewn with the dead bodies of bees—bees that came to get honey and found death. This alluring tree is a vivid emblem of the deceitfulness of sin. All walks of life, perdition itself, are strewn with those who have fallen victims to the fascinating *Judas tree* of sin.

Sin may please—at times, and for a while. But sin never worthily pays—never, never. Not once in all the centuries that have gone forever into the tomb of Time has sin ever paid any man in good coin. Always in counterfeit coin. Always in death wounds. Always in "broken cisterns that can hold no water." Always in filthy rags to cover the loathsome sores and iniquitous carbuncles it brings. Did it pay Adam and Eve according to its bright promise? Did it pay Cain in good coin? Did it pay David who "staked his crown for a woman's caress"?

Did it give anything to be desired to Absalom whom it hanged by the hair of his head? Did it give any precious things to Solomon whose sun set in midnight gloom? Did it pay a farthing of good coin to Benedict Arnold? Did it pay Napoleon who died "with vultures at his heart—a chained Prometheus, rebellious and defiant to the last, with a world exultant at his fall"? Did it pay Byron who said, as he drew nigh to the sunset gates of life, "The flower and fruits of love are gone, the worm, the canker, and the grief are mine alone"? Ask those broken human butterflies, old and miserable beneath their masks of paint, yet young beneath their masks of vice, in the sorrowful sisterhood of the streets if sin pays in worthy coin. Ask the drunkard, bloated and bruised, after nights of foolish revelry. Ask those who have followed sin to their own undoing if sin's payments are like sin's promises. All will tell you that sin

"Promises Life's bright bloom,
But gives the bitter ashes of the tomb;
Promises strength and gives a crumbling rope of sand;
Promises honor, but gives dishonor's scarlet brand;
Promises peace, but gives eternal thirst;
Promises bright visions but gives fangs accursed;
Promises feasting and a King's salute,
But gives black tables of Dead Sea fruit;
Sin offers realms but gives a prison cell;
Pledges heaven but gives the tooth of hell!"

Yes, they will tell you over and over, with reiteration full of lament and bitter tears, that

"For beauty's gesture and her loom of light,
For starry reason and for manly might,
Sin gives the skulking step, the furtive eye,
The curse, the groan, the death that cannot die."

"Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15).

Knowing this and believing this, I beg you to use sin as it will use you—without mercy. Spare it not, for it will not spare you. Put your heel upon it and crush it, for it will crush you, if you do not, as a boa constrictor crushes a doe in its relentless coils. Run your sword through it, for it hath cast down many wounded and dead. Kill it before it kills you. From the princes to the pigs it will take you. From the throne to the horrible pit. Spare not. "Slay utterly!" Hew it to pieces as Samuel chopped Agag. For, as a harlot, "sin weaves the winding sheet of souls, and lays them in the urn of everlasting death."

And now, remembering the exceeding evil of sin, the horrible sinfulness of sin, remember also that "personal holiness sought and found in Christ is a social obligation!"

It is finely generous for any man to say "I will give my life for the service of humanity." But what kind of life will you give? Some men I hope will never give themselves to the life of the com-

munity until they are cleaner, purer, better, more Christly. A young soldier said to his chaplain: "My life shall be a surgeon's knife to cut away this hideous growth of militarism that has fastened itself on the body of the world!" And that chaplain, to whom he spoke, said with terrific insight, "Yes, but is the knife sterilized?" It is fine for a young man to say "I will give myself." But what sort of self? Dr. Gordon used to say: "Not even the archangel Michael could play a decent tune on a cheap tin whistle!"

Let me add just here that, in the last analysis, the success of our colleges must be measured by the fidelity, truthfulness, purity, courage, and self-sacrifice manifested in the lives of those coming out from them. The country will judge largely of your college by you. Disgrace in your lives will bring disgrace upon your college. Evil in your lives will cause people to whisper in the closet and shout from the housetop dishonorable things against your Alma Mater.

They flung the taunt at Bonar Law that his government was made up of men of second class brains. He replied that he would not mind that provided only they had first class character.

Remembering the supremacy of first class character over most things, I beg you young men to "abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good." Say to sin:

"Not a petal from thy voluptuous flowers;
Not a sip of the wine of thy fornication;
Not a leaf from thy garlands gay;
Not a thread of thy garment spotted by the flesh;
Not a crumb from thy food of many dishes;
Not a moment of sleep on thy perfumed bed;
Not a step in thy mad dance!"

"Reckon ye yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Roman 6:11). For he that followeth after sin, followeth it to his own hurt and destruction, "The wages of sin is death" (Roman 6:23). "Fools make a mock of sin" (Prov. 14:9). "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. . . . Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Roman 6:12-13).

In conclusion I would have you believe that everywhere, always, it is wisdom superlative, to

V—FOLLOW CHRIST.

"After whom dost thou pursue?" If after Christ who said "Follow me" you follow, you have a leadership that is companionship, for he promises to go with us through every step till the last step—through every hour till the last hour. If you follow Him who is Light of light, you follow one who saith, "He that followeth me shall not walk in

darkness but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). If you follow him who is "Poet's Poet, Wisdom's Tongue," Teacher of teachers, you shall have "the wisdom that is from above" which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance and without hypocrisy" (James 3:17). For:

"Christ is the Way, and men without him are Cains, wanderers, vagabonds;
Christ is the Truth, and men without him are liars like the devil of old,
Christ is the Life, and men without him are 'dead in trespasses and sins';
Christ is the Light, and without him men are in darkness here and hereafter;
Christ is the Vine, and without him men are withered branches prepared for the fire;
Christ is the Rock, and men without him are carried away with the flood!"

Robert Browning's "Summum Bonum" may not be at all inappropriate but beautifully applicable here, if we but have eyes to see and ears to hear! Exquisite sweetness and bounteous beauty are in the words. Hear them:

"All the breath and the bloom of the year in the bag of one bee;
All the wonder and wealth of the mine in the heart of one gem;
In the core of one pearl all the shade and the shine of the sea;

Breath and bloom, shade and shine,—wonder, wealth, and—how far above them—
Truth that's brighter than gem,
Trust that's purer than pearl,—
Brightest truth, purest trust in the universe—all were for me
In the kiss of one girl."

And truly, as all this was for the poet, and for others, in the kiss of one girl, there is for us, in following Jesus Christ, all that's better than the best, all that's purer than the purest, all that's sweeter than the sweetest, all that is brighter than the brightest—all that men need to claim for themselves and for others, for this world and the world to come, for life and for death. All the problems of life and death are solved in Christ.

Though this has been said a thousand times people there are declaring that it seems increasingly difficult to make headway against the forces rolling in upon us from the confusion of the world—and asking, What shall we do? Many are telling us with pathetic lament in their voices that politicians are still clambering up the devious steeps of power upon the credulity, the fears, the sentimentalities, the ignorance of the crowd—and asking, What is the preventative of such? Here and there for a flickering hour some man in pulpit or on platform seems to have seized some place of leadership, but more often than not such voices are drowned by those who "loose wild tongues that hold not God in awe."

Multitudes are struggling desperately to hear, above the snarling clamors of the day, some voice to follow —some voice which will not die away in error and incompetence—and all around us multitudes ask what Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" O that we could somehow get men to believe that only Christ can give us our song amid the mournful monotony of the jangling inharmonies of the world. He is the only one now. The only one forever. But often among men there is a strange coldness and unbelief as to this truth. This blindness and insensibility has been expressed by one of our later poets in these words:

"A dog will take
The bone you throw to him; a mortal stares
In obstinate hostility if one
Longing to swell the number of his joys,
From laden hand beseech him to be blest.

"Entreat them to delight,
They grow as stubbornly insensible
As miser to a beggar's eloquence,
Clutching their clownish imbecility."

God keep you from being stubbornly insensible to the voice of him who says "Follow me."

French physicians distribute the phenomena of hypnotism into the lethargic, the cataleptic, the somnambulistic stages. They have succeeded in producing two of these stages coincidentally so that one hemisphere of the brain is asleep and the other

awake, one side of the face mournful and the other mirthful, at the same time. Grotesque enough, is is not? Yet not so grotesque as the attempt to blend the transfiguring light of the Eternal with the glare of the world's footlights. Those who deceive themselves into thinking they can subordinate Christ to a minor place make failure of life. Lost in the jungles of misdirected effort, of immoral or atheistical thinking, statesmen, philosophers, leaders, ever and anon entire nations, exhibit the prodigal waste of vital forces which irreligion, or religion prostituted to artificial ends, incurs. Love God with all your heart. Let your affections go out to him in utter abandon. Few there are who have really done this. But great is their reward! We are told that in the school of Socrates it was customary for each youth at the beginning of the term to bring the great teacher some gift. Among these scholars there was once a youth so poor that he brought nothing; but, when all the rest had given their presents, he flung himself at the feet of Socrates, and said, "O Socrates, I give thee myself!" And it is that gift which Jesus demands of us—that gift alone which he will accept.

Watkinson said: "Give that despairing musician an atom of Mozart's melodious brain or Beethoven's spirit—and music will swell from his instrument like thunder from the waves of the sea or whispers from summer zephyrs. Give that halting poet a spark of Shakespeare's fire—and verses will drop

from his pen like golden pollen from the stems of shaken lilies. Give that struggling painter a nerve of Turner's color sense—and his brush will catch the waves and the winds and the mountains in it, and that brush will spread crude paint into wondrous landscapes. Give that stammering speaker a lick of Demosthenes tongue—and people will listen like children frightened at the roar of a storm or like slaves to an emancipation proclamation. Give that baffled scientist a bit of Faraday's investigative skill—and the mysteries of Nature will stand revealed!"

Watkinson is right! And I am right now, and every man is right always, who urges you to believe and teaches you to know that only in Christ Jesus you measure up to the fullness of your possibilities. Only He who gave you your powers knows their possibilities. Only He who fashioned your life can tell the high and holy purpose to which it may be given. Of many "high and lofty" men and of many "lesser" men who consecrated what abilities they had to Christly service, it can be written as it has been written of Gladstone, the statesman with an empire in his brain and the miseries of multitudes in his eloquent mouth: "In Christ his mighty intellect found anchorage; in Christ his impetuous temper found restraint; in Christ his versatile personality found fulfillment."

Jesus who is "heir of all things" and to whom

"all power in heaven and earth is given," will not only save your souls and give you salvation through faith, but he will keep you from low passions, from becoming sodden victims of alcohol, from going after the strange woman "as a bird hasteth to the snare," "as an ox goeth to the slaughter," having warned you already that "her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." He will deliver you from the uncertainty of delayed decisions, from the enervating air of procrastination, from living with your losses and your griefs!

"Christ in you the hope of glory." Not only the glory of the future, but the glory of Christly character here and now. The glory of deliverance from the smiling ease with which faith in eternal things is thrown off and doubts, or lesser truths, grinningly taken on. The glory of deliverance from intellectual conceit that is unaware of the rattle of its dry bones. The glory of deliverance from contracting spiritual boundaries after extending intellectual frontiers. The glory of deliverance from the superficial mental illumination that lacks the urge of sacrificial passion. The glory of Christ enunciating himself within the precincts of your personality!

"After whom dost thou pursue?" After a flea? After a dead dog? God forbid. May you follow him, our preventative and curative Christ, who saith, "Follow Me!"

Put out the fires of all unworthy rest camps and

forward march, remembering that before you rise to go, he rises to go before you.

END

NOTE: This sermon, "Worthless Pursuits," is the baccalaureate sermon preached to the Citadel Military College of South Carolina.